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# THE REAL MALAY



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THE REAL MALAY

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THE REAL MALAY  
PEN PICTURES

BY

*SIR FRANK ATHELSTANE  
SWETTENHAM, K.C.M.G.*



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## TO THE READER

ONE sees, in newspapers, railway carriages, omnibuses, and throughout the meadows of England, advertisements which proclaim the innumerable uses, and absolute efficacy, of a host of patent cures for every ill that flesh is heir to. The specifics—whether in the form of pills, powders, potions, or plasters—will heal every sore, restore sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, hair to the bald, or work any other miracle at an extremely moderate cost. Babies clamour for these nostrums—if you can believe the pictured stories that meet your eye at every turn—fat old women simper at their recovered youth and slimness, after a second dose, and consumptive youths smash “try-your-strength” machines, in the vigour inspired by a single bottle of some famed elixir.

All this is very encouraging; and while the

pictures appeal to one's sense of the Beautiful in Art, the modest enumeration of the manifold virtues of the simples and the syrups brings us face to face with Truth.

It may be that I have not read the newspapers of widest circulation, have not travelled by the most favoured railways, studied the really popular omnibuses, or wandered through the best-advertised meadows, for I have not met with a cheap, portable, and effective giver of sleep.

In the nerve-exhausting bustle and excitement of an expiring century, what every one wants is the power to command sleep at short notice. I offer you this book, in the belief that, haply, you may find in it that needed restfulness, which will rapidly develop into blissful slumber. Unlike the pills and the potions, you gain the effect without losing the cause. There is no illustration, no "won't-be-happy-till-he-gets-it," because sleep is so generally unbecoming, to all but the very young, that I prefer to leave the picture to your imagination.

If my prescription fails; if the unexpected happens; I am willing to take the consequences,

and you can say, publicly or privately, that I misled you. I shall not be offended. If, on the other hand, my prescription produces the desired result, you will have both capital and experience, and I the reward of virtue.

The fair places of Malaya are as yet undesecrated by the mammoth placard of forbidding ugliness, but the Malays have their infallible cures, which possess at least as many and potent qualities as those so aggressively claimed for English quackery. Indeed, I remember that, some years ago, an epidemic of cholera broke out in a district of a Malay State, and I went there to see what could be done for the people. When I arrived, I found there had been a good many deaths, but the usual "scare" was absent. On inquiry, I learned that a medicine-man had appeared, shortly after the outbreak of the disease, and had sold, to almost all the Malays, a cholera-specific, for the very reasonable price of one dollar per charm. Talking to a group of people, I asked to see the charm, and they all held out their right hands, and showed a small piece of thin string tied round their wrists.

"Is that all?" I asked.

"That is all," they said.

"Where is the medicine-man?" I inquired.

"He has left the district."

"How many people bought the prophylactic?"

"About five hundred."

"The man has robbed you."

"Why?"

"Because the thing he sold you is only a bit of string, and useless."

"But we told him so, and he promised that if any one who had bought the charm was attacked by cholera, and died, he would, in every such case, give back the dollar."

Needless to say, I made no further attempt to shake so great a faith. The black death has a way of attacking the fearful; but the Destroying Angel passes by the doors of those who sleep in the happy confidence of security through the possession of a bit of magic string.

One word more. I advise those who are not interested in matters which send their countrymen across the seas, and keep them there, life-long, or life-short, exiles from their native land, to

turn over the first fifty-one pages of this book and begin their reading at that point.

For any who care to know by what insignificant means the outposts of the British Empire are advanced, and guarded, and strengthened (often against the wishes of her Majesty's advisers), how enemies are persuaded to be friends, and pathless jungles are opened to every form of enterprise—for them this first unvarnished picture may possess a wider interest and a deeper significance than any of the succeeding sketches.

F. A. S.

CARCOSA, MALAY PENINSULA,

*May 1899.*



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# THE REAL MALAY

## A NEW METHOD

OF all the momentous events of this fast-closing century, probably the most remarkable is the forcing of China from that position of exclusiveness which she has maintained inviolate throughout the ages. For many years the most intelligent and best-informed Englishmen have realised the possibilities of the Chinese Empire. They have gauged the value of that vast territory, with all its known and unknown resources, and the possibly greater value of a preponderating influence in a country inhabited by four hundred millions of the hardest-working, most easily governed race on earth. An understanding with China, not many years ago, might have saved the situation and benefited British interests to a larger extent than an alliance with any Western Power. The opportunity went with the war between China and Japan, a war which

showed the world China's weakness, and gave Russia an opening, of which she was not slow to avail herself.

Japan triumphed; but, at Russia's instigation, France and Germany aided the Northern Power to prevent Japan acquiring all the territorial advantages she expected as the result of her victory. Then Germany occupied Kiau Chau, and Russia possessed herself of Port Arthur and Talien Wan. Great Britain replied by occupying Wei Hai Wei, and, since then, China has been treated as a *quantité négligeable*, while Western and Far-Western nations have set the policy of the "open door" against the policy of partition, and gone very near to blows in advancing their rival claims, or defending their real or imaginary interests.

More recently, the war between Spain and America has impressed not only the British public, but foreign nations, with the value of coaling stations, docking facilities and bases of supply—and it is clear that England possesses, all over the world, very special advantages in this respect. Leaving the Mediterranean out of the question, we have, in Áden, Colombo, Singapore, and Hongkong, a chain of fortresses, of harbours of refuge, of docks and workshops, coaling stores and victualling yards,

that give the British navy and mercantile marine an unrivalled position. It is just becoming known to the British public that one of the best defended, most important and most conveniently situated of these stations is Singapore; and people are now beginning to learn that Singapore is in the Straits of Malacca, and that it was secured for England by the foresight and determination of Sir Stamford Raffles, one of the greatest, and least known or appreciated, of the builders of the British Empire.

I call Singapore important and conveniently situated, because it is about equidistant between Ceylon and Hongkong; because it commands the entrance to the China Sea by the route of the Straits of Malacca; and because if, with Singapore as a centre, you describe a circle, with a radius of a thousand miles, that circle will cut, or include, Siam, Borneo, the edge of the Philippine group, the French possessions in Cochin-China, and the Dutch possessions in Java, Sumatra, and the Malay Archipelago.

Moreover, though Singapore is a very small island, it has the Malay Peninsula for hinterland; it is the central market, or port of trans-shipment, for all the countries I have named, except the first two (Ceylon and Hongkong), which are themselves

British possessions ; it is a great distributing centre ; it possesses immense stores of coal, and docking facilities of a kind unrivalled in the farther East, except in our own colony of Hongkong.

To understand the mercantile importance of Singapore, one should consult Colonel Howard Vincent's statistical map of the world. I will only say that ten million tons of shipping entered and left it in 1898, and the value of the trade of the port for that year was, approximately, three hundred and fifty millions of dollars, about equal to £35,000,000 sterling.

Singapore, which is just over one degree north of the equator, and within twenty miles of the southernmost point of Asia, was acquired in 1819, and, up till 1867, it formed, with Penang, Malacca, and the province of Wellesley, one of the Indian Presidencies. In that year the Straits Settlements, as the new colony was so unfortunately named, was handed over to the Colonial Office, and the period of its greater prosperity began.

Up till and beyond that date, the British Government absolutely declined to interfere in the Malay States of the Peninsula, though repeatedly pressed to do so ; but a long series of provocations, and the advent of Major-General Sir Andrew Clarke as

Governor, resulted, in 1874, in an entirely new departure, namely, the protection of the southern part of the Peninsula. Since then the colony's revenue has increased threefold; the port and harbour of Singapore have been put into a state of defence; the garrison has been strengthened; and the prosperity and importance of this possession has grown, *pari passu*, with the development of its immediate hinterland, the Protected Malay States.

The history of the British Settlements on the Straits of Malacca may be summarised in very few words. Malacca was seized by Albuquerque in 1511. The place, then a very important emporium of trade, was wrested from the Portuguese by the Dutch in 1640, and they retained it till 1795, when we took it from them. In 1818 we restored it, in conformity with the Treaty of Vienna; but in 1824 it again passed into British hands, and has remained in our keeping ever since. The island of Penang, which is about two hundred and sixty miles north-west of Malacca, was occupied by the East India Company in 1786, at the instance of a trader in the Eastern Seas named Francis Light. The island and a strip of mainland were purchased from the Raja of Kedah, on terms which were afterwards repudiated by the East India Company, to their great

shame and our present loss. The island of Singapore, which lies some one hundred and ten miles south-east of Malacca, was acquired by Sir Stamford Raffles in 1819, and he made his occupation sure by settling, not only with the titular ruler, the Sultan of Johore, but also with the chief in local occupation, the Tēmǝnggong of Johore.

These three Settlements were secured with one and the same object, to prevent the Dutch from shutting the door on British enterprise in the Malay Peninsula and Archipelago, and to obtain, as Mr. Light put it, "a convenient magazine for Eastern trade," on the highway between India and China.

For fifty years after the founding of Singapore the Settlements were left very much to themselves, and, by reason of their convenient situation, the fact that they were free ports, and later, the construction of admirable docks and workshops in Singapore, they prospered amazingly. With insignificant internal resources, a small area, and no real customs duties, the three Settlements were, in 1874, in receipt of a revenue of \$1,458,872, which was more than sufficient to defray all their expenses, and they had then, and have now, no public debt.

So far the British Government had steadily declined to interfere in the affairs of the neighbouring

Malay States ; and when appealed to by British subjects, issued to them, and all concerned, the following notice: "If persons, knowing the risks they run, owing to the disturbed state of these countries, choose to hazard their lives and properties for the sake of the large profits which accompany successful trading, they must not expect the British Government to be answerable if their speculation proves unsuccessful."

That warning had its deterrent effect on the British trader ; but the hand of the Government was forced, not by our too-enterprising countrymen, not by the more modern mission of adventure and exploration, but by the inability of the Malay rulers to administer their own States, or control the Chinese, who had been attracted to them by the richness of their mineral deposits.

In 1874, the ignorance of all Europeans in the colony concerning their near neighbours in the Malay Peninsula almost passes belief. They had been warned off the ground, and had taken the warning to heart. Mysterious Malaya was a *terra incognita* to official and trader alike. There were no reliable books on the subject, the whole country was an absolute blank on every map ; even the names of the States and the titles of their rulers

were not known to more than half-a-dozen Englishmen. Of the nature of the country, the character of the people, their numbers, distribution, sentiments, or condition, there was an ignorance, profound, absolute, and complete. An impression, however, prevailed that some kind of internal struggle for power, for place, or for the sheer pleasure of fighting, was constantly going on. There was also a strong belief that Malays were treacherous by nature and pirates by trade, and that there were no special inducements for a white man to trust himself in such a barbarous country.

Still there were a very few men in the colony who hankered after the Malay nettle, who desired to grasp it for the pleasure of showing their ineradicable belief in the capacity of their nation to deal with any untamed people, any specially thorny and difficult business. These desired then, as others do now, and as their successors will desire throughout the coming century, to paint the unexplored Peninsula red on the maps, for the glory of England and the envy of her rivals.

A small thing, as so often happens, changed the policy of the British Government in regard to the Malay States. Rather, I should say, a number of small things, coming together, found the right man



ready to seize the opportunity. British expansion, in the East at all events, is a record of the doings of courageous, capable, and masterful men. Opportunities may tear the cloaks from a thousand excellent, hesitating, conscience-burdened theorists and talkers, who never get beyond their good intentions; while one man of courage, determination, and action, inspired by the fire of patriotism, will make opportunities for himself, to the profit of his country. Such a man was Stamford Raffles, and to-day his countrymen can gauge to a nicety England's gain and his personal reward. No true patriot counts either his present risk, or his prospective advantage, when intent upon his country's interests; the greater so immeasurably overshadows the less. But probably no true man can help a feeling of mortification when the sacrifice of the best he has to offer passes without acknowledgment. Raffles was a great man, and stronger in individuality than most, but neglect touched him, and embittered the closing years of his life. The founder of Singapore, could he have revisited that city in 1874, would have rejoiced to see to what trade-importance his almost uninhabited island had grown. Could he have returned again, a quarter of a century later, to find the place a great naval stronghold, one of the chain

of fortresses, of coaling and refitting stations, between England and China, the centre of a vast circle of trade and the market of the developed Malayan hinterland, he would have forgotten his personal slights in the knowledge of his country's gain, the proof of his foresight, the justification of his policy, and the fulfilment of his dearest hopes.

In 1873, Major-General Sir Andrew Clarke, R.E., was appointed Governor of the colony of the Straits Settlements, and, as the Colonial Office had been flooded with complaints concerning the evil state of affairs in the Malay Peninsula, Sir Andrew came armed with instructions to inquire into the state of affairs, and to say whether he thought it might be possible and advisable to interfere, and introduce some such system of British Resident Advisers as that which prevailed in the native States in India.

As though to greet the new Governor, reports of internal dissensions in all the western States came treading on each other's heels.

The Chinese, engaged in mining in Perak, got completely out of hand, and fought each other with a fury and carnage unknown to Malay warfare. One party, driven towards the coast, deprived of all food supplies, and utterly desperate, took to piracy, and with fast-pulling boats preyed upon

every passing vessel, with complete impartiality. The cargoes were looted, the crews murdered, and the vessels burned. For months her Majesty's ships had patrolled the Straits without securing a single pirate; and, at last, in an engagement within the mouth of a Perak river, two naval officers were seriously wounded. That brought about the destruction of the pirates' principal stronghold and the interference of the Governor.

Between the Chinese factions the fight had developed into a war of secret societies, and, not content with their operations in Perak, the leaders, who were supported and directed by heads of societies in Penang, attacked British posts beyond the borders of Perak, and blew up the Penang residence of a Perak chief, hoping thereby to gratify their spite and get rid of his control. Lastly, one of three rival claimants for the sultanhip of Perak wrote to the Governor, begging for his assistance and the loan of a British officer to teach him the mysteries of sound administration.

Sir Andrew Clarke did not wait to write a report that might have led to nothing; he seized this opportunity to deal with the Chinese quarrel, to summon the Perak chiefs to a meeting—whereat the claimant with the best title was re-

cognised as Sultan—the Treaty of Pangkor was concluded, and a British officer, Captain Speedy, was temporarily appointed British Resident of Perak. A commission of three British officers<sup>1</sup> walked through the most disturbed parts of the country; and, in one month, caused all forts and stockades to be destroyed, settled the question of disputed mining areas, and released from captivity forty-five Chinese women, held in bondage by Malay and Chinese captors. When the commissioners left the State and made their report, all fighting had ceased, every fortification had been destroyed, every captive Chinese woman had been restored to liberty, and there has never been a piracy in Perak waters since. From that moment the Chinese have given no serious trouble.

As to Malay matters, they were not so easily settled. One Sultan had been recognised, but there was another in existence, who declined to give way, and a third aspirant, who was naturally dissatisfied. The State of Perak covers nearly ten thousand square miles, and one British officer, even two (for, a few months later, Mr. J. W. W. Birch was appointed Resident, with Capt. Speedy as his

<sup>1</sup> Col. Dunlop, R.A., C.M.G., Mr. W. A. Pickering, C.M.G., and the writer.

assistant), could not be everywhere at once, in a roadless, jungle-covered country. Consequently, difficulties arose, the acknowledged Sultan, who had asked for a Resident, proved faithless, resented advice, or any interference with the indulgence of his own inclinations, and the Resident was assassinated by a powerful chief, acting with the knowledge and approval of both the rival kings.

The first small expedition sent to punish the murderers met with disaster. A number of lives were lost, and a second force, consisting of troops from China and India, under Major-General Colborne and Brigadier-General John Ross, with a naval brigade under Capt. Buller, R.N. (now Admiral Sir A. Buller, K.C.B.), attacked and captured the enemy's strongholds, put those in arms to flight, occupied various strategic points, and—while giving a very useful exhibition of England's power, and the capacity of her soldiers and sailors to reach any Malay fastness—furnished to the civil officers that material support which was necessary to enforce respect for their advice in trying to introduce a better form of government.

Within eighteen months of the murder of the Resident every British soldier had left the country. It is also worth mentioning that Perak eventually

paid the entire cost of the military expedition ; and every man, directly or indirectly concerned in Mr. Birch's death, sooner or later had to pay a severe, but merited, penalty for his share in the crime.

The geographical position of the three Settlements of Singapore, Penang, and Malacca has been briefly indicated ; and it will be useful here to say that the Malay Peninsula stretches southwards from Siam and Burmah in somewhat the shape of a footless leg, the island of Singapore lying close to the southern extremity. Johore is Singapore's nearest neighbour, and, unlike any other State, it has one coast-line in the Straits of Malacca and the other in the China Sea. Immediately north of Johore is Pahang, on the east coast, and, on the west, Negri Sembilan, Selangor, and then Perak. These four constitute the Federated Malay States. Johore is also under British protection, but is not in the Federation.

North of Pahang are the semi-independent States of Trenggânu and Kelantan, to which must be added Patâni under Siamese protection. North of Perak is Kědah, also under Siamese protection.

Very shortly after the conclusion of the Pangkor Treaty, Sir Andrew Clarke took steps to establish British influence in Selangor and in the neighbour-

ing State of Sungei Ujong, one of the group of small States round Malacca. These districts, nine in all (whence the name Negri Sembilan), had once been united, but the ties had grown weak, and, as the result of constant quarrels, and the absence of any strong central authority, they had drifted apart, and each maintained an almost complete independence of all the others. Successive Governors, at different times in the last twenty-five years, have succeeded in extending British influence to the "Nine States," and, only last year, the union of the provinces was re-established, and the various chiefs formally acknowledged the Sultan (or Yang di Pertuan, as he is more properly styled), of Negri Sembilan as their titular ruler.

Pahang accepted a British Resident in 1889, but not very willingly; and, as in Perak, discontented chiefs caused serious trouble, which was only put down with the assistance of military forces, borrowed from Perak and Selangor. Since 1894 there has been no disturbance of any kind, and, judging by past experience, it may safely be said that, with ordinary care and a proper consideration of the reasonable prejudices, wishes, and feelings of the Malay population, no State in the Federation need fear that any Malay chief will again attempt to take

up arms against the Government. The Malay labouring classes, the *rāiyats*, have no desire to oppose a régime that has so greatly improved the conditions of life for them.

To return to the earliest days of the residential system. Into the midst of a war-hardened and desperate population—chiefly of Malays, but, in Perak and Selangor, tempered, or ill-tempered, by a strong admixture of Chinese—individual British officers had been thrown, as one might cast a dog into the sea; leaving it to the dog to find his way out again, or drown. It would weary the reader if I were to truthfully describe the state of affairs and the conditions of life in the Malay States when this interesting experiment was first undertaken. I will not attempt it; but I will remind him of two notable facts, first, that, up to this time, no white man had, since the beginning of time, ever gone into the Peninsula and tried to exercise authority there; secondly, that, for many years, all these States had been in a condition of anarchy and strife, so that the only law, known or recognised, was that of "might," and, in its name, things were done that had better remain untold.

Of minor, but still important, considerations, the following must be mentioned. In Perak, the first



British Resident, after a few months spent in the country, had been assassinated. A military expedition had vindicated the prestige of a power hitherto unfelt, and the existence of which was but vaguely realised. Some of those who opposed this power had been killed, others arrested, executed, imprisoned, or deported. Their relatives and adherents naturally resented these stringent but necessary measures. Then every other chief found that he was no longer a law to himself; that he could not levy taxes as he pleased; could not kill without inquiry, ravish or rob without punishment, requisition the labour of the *raiyats* without payment. All these chiefs, their relatives, friends, followers, and sympathisers, were secretly, and sometimes openly, the enemies and opponents of the representative of that authority which had, in a sense, pulled their house down about their ears.

The circumstances in Sungei Ujong were almost identical, but the people concerned were infinitely fewer in numbers, the area to be administered much more circumscribed, and, therefore, the difficulties less.

In Selangor, beyond a naval demonstration, the shelling of some forts, and the execution of certain reputed pirates, there had been no conflict with

British forces, and no British troops were ever employed to support the Resident's authority. But the people were worn out by years of internal disorder; the Sultan possessed no real power; the Chinese had joined in the struggle, and fought manfully on the side of one or other of the Malay leaders, and the misery of perpetual strife had driven hundreds from their homes, their lands, and their country, to seek peace abroad.

In all the States the ruling class, the men of influence, and the natives of the soil were Muhammadans; not bigoted, as Muhammadans go, but still followers of the Prophet, to whom the professing Christian was *anathema maranatha*. Lastly, these Malays were then, and are still (but in some particulars to a less extent), a courageous, haughty, and exclusive people, infinitely conservative, hating change, full of strange prejudices, clinging to their ancient customs, to the teachings of the men of old time, and ready to die to uphold them, or simply in obedience to the orders of their hereditary chiefs. Among ancient institutions was the infamous custom of debt slavery, with all its attendant horrors; and, for many reasons that need not be explained here, this private *corvée*, this enslavement of men and women, of boys and girls, free-born

and free by the law of Muhammad, was the practice most valued, most tenaciously clung to, by every man of rank, of means, or influence in the country.

If I seem to unduly insist upon the conditions of Malay life into which the first British Residents were thrown, it is not to accentuate the difficulties of their task, but simply to prove a proposition, which seems to me to be of considerable interest and importance to all Western nations whose ambition or destiny brings them into direct contact with coloured races. My object is to show that, when the British Government at last consented to interfere in Malay affairs, *the conditions of the problem to be solved were as complex as ingenuity could have devised. Further, that the means employed to grapple with this uninviting situation, and evolve order out of chaos, were entirely novel. Finally, that the result obtained has been strikingly satisfactory.*

To Perak were appointed a Resident and Assistant-Resident. A few undisciplined Sikhs and Pathans supplied a guard, which proved unreliable. To Selangor was sent one British Resident, and to Sungei Ujong a single British officer. In both these last cases, the officers were accompanied by guards of about twenty-five Malay Police, and they

formed the original nucleus of the police forces afterwards raised for those States.

I myself was accredited to the Sultan of Selangor, and my place of abode was the City of Festivals.<sup>1</sup> I went in a gun-vessel—H.M.S. *Hart*, as far as I remember—and later, another gun-vessel visited me. The officers condoled with me on my forlorn position and uninviting surroundings; but I may say here (as I am never likely to return to the subject again), that this sympathy was thrown away upon me. I was delighted to go to that snake-haunted, mosquito-breeding swamp, and, in the twelve months that I spent in Selangor, without the companionship of any other white man, I never felt the dulness of my surroundings for a single day. The environment, to look at, was abhorrent, and depressing beyond description, but the people were strange and interesting, and made the place unusually exciting. My colleagues, in the States on either side of me, were rather better situated, and felt themselves no more fit subjects for pity than I did. We spent our time getting about the country, as best we could, roughly mapping it, seeking out the best points for villages, police stations, customs houses, and landing-stages, and we

<sup>1</sup> See "A Silver-point."

did what we could to meet, and make friends with, all the influential people of the country. Then came the real difficulties.

In the Pangkor Engagement are two clauses that practically placed the whole administration in the hands of the Resident. They are these:—

“Clause VI. That the Sultan receive and provide a suitable residence for a British officer, to be called Resident, who shall be accredited to his Court, and whose advice must be asked and acted upon in all questions other than those touching Malay religion and custom.”

“Clause X. That the collection and control of all revenues and the general administration of the country be regulated under the advice of these Residents.”

It is evident that the collection and control of all revenue, and the tendering of advice which must be acted upon, cover all executive authority. In August 1876, however, the Secretary of State's instructions were sent to the Residents of Perak and Selangor, and it was added, “you will observe that in continuing the residential system her Majesty's Government define the functions of the Resident to be the giving of influential and responsible advice to the ruler. . . . The Residents are not to interfere more frequently or to a greater

extent than is necessary with the minor details of government," &c., &c.

In May 1878, a further circular was despatched to the Residents of the three then-Protected States warning them that, "the Residents have been placed in the native States as advisers, not as rulers, and, if they take upon themselves to disregard this principle, they will most assuredly be held responsible if trouble springs out of their neglect of it."

The Secretary of State said the circular was "both necessary and judicious in its terms," but he also wrote: "I fully recognise the delicacy of the task imposed on the Residents, and am aware that much must be left to their discretion on occasions when prompt and firm action is called for."

This, naturally, threw the entire responsibility on the Resident, and whether he failed in character and firmness, or whether he showed excessive zeal and anxiety to remove abuses and advance the interests of the State, he did so with the knowledge that he could not run with the treaty and hold with the instructions. Perak is the only State where these special treaty powers were conferred on the Resident; but, as every one knows, not only there, but also in all the States, the Residents, by force of circumstances, went beyond the instructions, and car-

ried on the administration with a wider authority, but much on the same lines as though the States had formed an integral portion of a British colony.

In India, Residents in native States are the agents of the Viceroy, the eyes and ears of the Government of India, a position quite unlike that occupied by British Residents in Malâya, where "the general administration of the country" is regulated under their advice. In Egypt the task set, and performed with such marvellous success, was widely dissimilar, though, in some respects, the same kind of administrative machinery has been employed on a vastly extended scale. The problem now offered for solution in the Philippines more nearly resembles the Malay case; though, perhaps, it would be more correct to say that while there are, even there, wide differences in the circumstances, the same methods might be equally successful, if the opportunity for employing them has not already passed.<sup>1</sup>

From the earliest days of protection, it was laid down, and necessarily so, that the Malay States, in their relations with the neighbouring colony, would look to the Governor as the controlling authority behind the Residents, and that, in all other respects,

<sup>1</sup> This was written before the outbreak of hostilities between the Americans and Philipinos.

each native State would supply its own machinery of government. In the gradual education of that staff of officers which has grown up to assist the Residents, the experience of the Straits Settlements has been largely drawn upon for rules and orders in the conduct of affairs. Similarly, colonial and Indian laws have been adapted to deal with circumstances that had a parallel in those places; but in the Malay States there are prevailing circumstances utterly unknown elsewhere, and, to meet these, local knowledge alone could safely be employed.

State Councils were early established, and in these councils sit the Sultans, the most important of the Malay chiefs, and some Chinese. They deal with all legislation, and with the appointments of all native headmen, with their allowances, and with the civil list. They have been wonderful safety-valves, and to be a member is considered a very high privilege.

Slavery and debt slavery were both abolished within a few years; but, in making that simple and apparently natural statement, no idea is conveyed of the burning nature of this question, and the exceedingly delicate handling that it required and received.

In 1874, no Malay man was ever seen unarmed.



The men usually carried from three to eight weapons, and boys of a few years old two or three. The carrying of arms was gradually forbidden, and is now unknown. A *keris*, which used to be a Malay's most prized possession, has now very little value.

Vexatious taxes were at once abandoned, and all the ports of the Malay States are free. The exclusive rights of retailing opium and spirits were farmed on the same principles as in the neighbouring colony, while the Malay Governments still permitted public gambling, under rigorous control, for reasons which seem all-sufficient to those who realise the impossibility of suppressing the practice. The Resident's guard developed into a highly-disciplined regiment of Sikhs; communications were opened in every direction; all most important questions—land, mines, labour, &c.—were dealt with; posts, telegraphs, railways established, and water-works constructed, to supply all principal towns; the country was divided into districts and divisions, with all the usual administrative machinery; and Courts of Justice were opened at every centre of population.

Smallpox and cholera used to decimate the Malay population, and the fear of these scourges amounted to a bad form of panic. Vaccination, sanitation, and

the ministrations of qualified medical practitioners have, however, altered all this ; but the Malay still declines to become an in-patient of those excellent hospitals which are found all over the States. Other nationalities have no such scruples.

Then, of course, prisons were built ; very creditable institutions they are, and they will bear the closest scrutiny. Education, too, received some of the attention it deserved, and the results are promising. Little effort has been made to do more than teach the three R's in the vernacular, and to inculcate habits of order and regularity. In the principal towns there are English schools, where children of all nationalities can qualify themselves for posts requiring a knowledge of that language ; but the desire of the Malay Governments is rather to supply technical and agricultural education than the study of classics, science, and that higher education which seems to denationalise the Eastern and render him unfit for the work lying ready to his hand, while it never really qualifies him to succeed in careers which he comes to believe are the inheritance of those who have learned how to write, or even pronounce, the longest English words, without any just appreciation of their meaning.

All this sounds well enough, and any inquiring

mind can, by personal observation, see that much has been done, and well done. No greater mistake could be made, however, than to suppose that the result might not have been extremely different. Our neighbours, the Dutch, have had, in Sumatra, an experience as unpleasant as it has been costly. Even now, to imagine that any native State can be treated like a British colony is culpable ignorance. I have spoken of the residential system, but in reality there was no system; what there is now has grown of experience gained in attempting the untried. A British officer, acting under the instructions of a distant Governor, is sent to "advise" a Malay ruler and his chiefs. The officer is told he is responsible for everything, but he is not to interfere in details. His advice must be followed, but he must not attempt to enforce it, and so on. He must keep the peace, see that justice is administered, respect vested interests, abolish abuses, raise a revenue, foster British interests, do his best for the State, and obey the instructions he receives from Singapore; and with it all he is, at his peril, to remember that he is only the adviser of the Malay ruler! Out of that somewhat difficult position has grown the present administration; and the main reason why success has been secured is twofold:

first, because a succession of Governors trusted their Residents and supported them; and, secondly, because of that very possession of large authority which was at once the strength and the weakness of the residential idea. Had the authority been less, the results to-day would certainly have been very far short of those achieved; but for all that, it may be safely affirmed that, whilst the power for good was immense, the power for mistakes, for extravagance, for favouritism, was greater than should be placed in any single hand. This was the real flaw, and it has been removed by federation.

The Federation of the four Protected States was brought about in 1895. Without abrogating any existing treaty, the new departure provided for administrative federation and mutual assistance, with men and money; the more prosperous and wealthy States agreeing to supply funds for the development of the more backward. The arrangement also sanctioned the appointment of a Resident-General, as the agent and representative of the British Government, under the High Commissioner, and the States undertook to raise a force of Indian soldiers for service in any part of the Peninsula, or, if required, in the neighbouring British colony.

After a three years' trial it is possible to speak

of United Malaya, with some degree of confidence. The experiment has proved a distinct success, and the difficulty is to refrain from saying all it has accomplished. It has brought the Malay rulers together and made them friends, and, while proving the reality of a union that could otherwise have never come home to them, it has given them an increased feeling of importance and pride, by reason of their connection with a wider theatre of influence and action. It has thereby proved to them that we fulfil our promises, and desire to put the Malay ruling classes forward, rather than set them aside.) As long as they are satisfied on this point, they prefer to leave all matters of detail to the Residents.

Then federation has secured uniformity, and it wanted federation to show how many and wide the differences were, and how rapidly they were increasing. It has certainly secured a higher standard of administration in all departments. It has given most of the senior officers of Government valuable opportunities of official intercourse with their colleagues throughout the Federation. This is specially the case as regards the Residents. It has given the Malay States a Judge, a Legal Adviser, and a Secretary for Chinese Affairs, whose services have already been of the utmost value. It has enabled the re-

sponsible officers to agree to identical laws to deal with lands, mines, civil and criminal procedure, and many other matters of first-rate interest. It has combined the civil services of all the States ; it has produced a highly-disciplined regiment of Indian soldiers, called the Malay States Guides, and re-organised the police forces under the direction of one Commissioner.

Lastly, the Federation has assumed responsibility for all the money advanced by the Straits Colony to Malay States, and the present Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Chamberlain), has conferred on the union the greatest benefit that has ever yet fallen to its lot, by sanctioning the raising of a small loan to construct about 170 miles of railway, and so complete the through line from a point on the mainland opposite Penang, through Province Wellesley (in British territory), Perak, and Selangor, to the capital of the Negri Sembilan, whence there is already an existing line to the coast at Port Dickson. This extension should be completed in 1902, and, with existing lines, will give the Malay States about 350 miles of metre-gauge railway. Had the Straits Settlements and the Malay State of Johore, during the last fifteen years, pursued the same policy as that followed in Federated Malaya, the year 1902

might have seen this main Peninsula line extended to Singapore, with such a steam ferry connecting Johore with Singapore Island, as will complete the communication between Province Wellesley and the Island of Penang.

I have often been asked what it is we do in the Malay States. The answer is that we do everything that has to be done in the administration and development of twenty-five thousand square miles of territory, inhabited by a population of over half a million people, of different races, colours, religions, characters, and pursuits.

If I have succeeded in giving anything like a correct impression of the task that was undertaken in 1874, when two or three English officers went, with blind confidence, into an unknown country, to teach an unknown people a difficult art, which they had then no real desire to learn; and, if the reader has now a general idea of how far the British Residents, their successors and assistants, succeeded in discharging what was described as "a delicate task," this seems to be the place to briefly detail the means by which the end has been obtained.

Having been given what, if you like, we will call an opportunity—not perhaps a very attractive one—how did we deal with it? How did we treat the

people who invited us to send them a teacher, and then, having obtained the real end they sought, murdered their guest ?

It may fairly be said that my words convey a suggestion which is incorrect. It was not the Malay people who asked for the British official ; it was a disappointed Malay Raja who, desiring British recognition of a coveted position, offered the invitation as a means to that end. He obtained the end he sought, and he was properly held responsible for what happened to the guest entrusted to his care.

The first requirement was to learn the language of the people to be ruled. I mean, to speak it and write it well. And the first use to make of this knowledge was to learn as much as possible about the people—their customs, traditions, characters, and idiosyncrasies. An officer who has his heart in his work will certainly gain the sympathies of those over whom he spends this trouble. In the Malay States the Residents have always insisted upon officers passing an examination in Malay, and the standard is a high one.

The main care of those responsible for the administration was to keep faith in any matters of agreement, and to do everything possible to secure justice for every class and every nationality, without



fear or favour. To punish crime and redress wrong is, probably, the greatest novelty that can be offered to an Eastern, and, though he has been accustomed to all forms of bribery, he very soon understands and appreciates the change of régime, when to offer a bribe is not only an insult, but will almost certainly get the would-be briber into serious trouble.

It may be assumed that the leading motive of government in an English Dependency is to spend, for its advantage, all the revenues raised in it, never seeking to make money out of a distant possession, or exact any contribution towards Imperial funds. The Malay States are not, of course, British Colonies, and the rule I speak of has been very carefully observed with them. This policy is one which appeals specially to intelligent natives of the East, and as long as these principles are maintained, the spread of English rule can only be for good, and no native race, Eastern or otherwise, will regret the advent of English advice, as in Malaya, or English control, as in India.

So much for what was done. It is almost as important to bear in mind that those responsible were careful to avoid any attempt to force English views, even when English opinion seemed practically unanimous on a subject, upon a people living under

utterly different conditions, and who, if their voice is hard to hear, may still bitterly resent what they think an intolerable interference.

In all the States there were three classes of natives to be dealt with; first the Malay chiefs, the hitherto rulers of the country; second, the Malay people; third, the Chinese.

In a work styled "Navigation and Voyages of Lewis Wertemanns of Rome," published in the year 1503, there is the following passage: "When we came to the City of Malacka (which some call Meleka), we were incontinent commanded to come to the Sultan, being a Mahomedan and subject to the great Sultan of China, and payeth him tribute, of which tribute the cause is, that more than eighty years ago that city was builded by the Sultan of China for none other cause than only for the commodity of the haven, being doubtless one of the fairest in that ocean. The region is not every where fruitful, yet hath it sufficient of wheat and flesh and but little wood. They have plenty of fowls as in Calicut, but the Popinjays are much finer. There is also found Sandilium and Tin, likewise elephants, horses, sheep, kyne, pardilles, bufflos, peacocks, and many other beasts and fowls. They have but few fruits. The people are of

blackish ashe colour. They have very large foreheads, round eyes, and flat noses. It is dangerous there to go abroad in the night, the inhabitants are so given to rob and murder. The people are fierce, of evil condition, and unruly, for they will obey to no Governor, being altogether given to rob and murder, and, therefore, say to their Governors that they will forsake country if they strive to bind them to order, which they say the more boldly, because, they are near unto the sea and may easily depart to other places."

The description is highly interesting, but must not be accepted as altogether accurate. At any rate the wheat and the horses could hardly have been local products, while the reputed scarcity of wood is at least curious; but no doubt the popinjays were there. Four centuries of Western domination have made the Malacca Malays the mildest, least warlike of all their race. One statement in the above account is still typical of Malay character; if the Government is not liked, the people not only threaten to leave the country, they go; but the cause cannot fairly be ascribed to a desire to rob and murder without hindrance.

Another authority, Newhoff, writing in 1662, says: "Whilst the Portuguese were in possession

of it, this city was very famous for its traffic and riches in gold, precious stones, and all other varieties of the Indies. Malacca being the key of China and Japan trade, and of the Molucca islands and Sunda. In short, Malacca was the richest city in the Indies, next to Goa and Ormus."

Yet another, Dr. John Francis Gomelli Careri, wrote: "The Port of Malacca is very safe, and has a great commerce from east and west. . . . The dominion of the Dutch reaches but three miles round the city, because the natives being a wild people, living like beasts, they will not easily submit to bear the Holland yoke."

The information given by the writers of those days, and even by Valentyn and other Dutch writers, is meagre enough, and cannot, I think, claim to be the result of personal study at close quarters. In any case the adventurous spirits, the robbers and murderers, probably found the Portuguese and Dutch rule in Malacca uncongenial, and went back into the jungle fastnesses of the Malay States, where, for nearly four hundred years after the occupation of Malacca, they remained unmolested by the white man. Holland's struggle with Acheen, a struggle of our own time, which has lasted for twenty-five years and still finds the Malays unsub-

duced, may perhaps suggest the cause of this immunity.

In the Malay sketches contained in this and a previous volume, I have endeavoured to portray, as exactly as I could, the Malay as he is in his own country, against his own most picturesque and fascinating background. I will not here make further reference to him, beyond saying, broadly, that he deeply resented our first coming, and has lived to change his mind. His conversion has been slow, as might be expected with one so constituted and with such traditions, but still it is so genuine that he will candidly confess both the original feeling and the present recantation. The position he occupies in the body politic is that of the heir to the inheritance. The land is Malaya, and he is the Malay. Let the infidel Chinese and the evil-smelling Hindu from Southern India toil, but of their work let some share of profit come to him. They are strangers and unbelievers; and while he is quite willing to tolerate them, and to be amused, rather than angered, by their strange forms of idolatry, their vulgar speech in harsh tongues, and their repulsive customs, he thinks it only fitting that they should contribute to his comfort and be ready to answer to his behests. The Malay hates labour,

and contributes very little to the revenues in the way of taxation. He cultivates his rice-fields, when he is made to do so by stern necessity, or the bidding of his headmen, and he is a skilful fisherman, because that is in the nature of sport. He plays at trade sometimes, but almost invariably fails to make a living out of it; because, having once invested his capital in a stock, he spends all the money he receives for sales, and then finds he has no means to continue his business. And yet, he is a delightful companion, a polite and often an interesting acquaintance, and an enemy who is not to be despised. He has aspirations. He loves power and place, and his soul hankers after titles of honour. In all these desires his women-folk are keenly interested. They apply the spur, and will readily consent to become the man's mouthpiece, when they think the good things of this world can be got by judicious flattery or tearful pleading.

The Chinese have, under direction, made the Protected States what they are. They are the bees who suck the honey from every profitable undertaking.

A thorough experience of Malays will not qualify an official to deal with Chinese—a separate education is necessary for that, but it is a lesson more easy to learn. It is almost hopeless to expect to

make friends with a Chinaman, and it is, for a Government officer, an object that is not very desirable to attain. The Chinese, at least that class of them met with in Malaya, do not understand being treated as equals ; they only realise two positions—the giving and the receiving of orders ; they are the easiest people to govern in the East for a man of determination, but they must know their master, as he must know them. The Chinese admire and respect determination of character in their rulers, and hold that it is a characteristic as necessary as the sense of justice. The man who possesses the judicial mind, but is too weak to enforce his own judgment, will never be successful in dealing with Chinese.

Until Governor Sir Cecil Smith exorcised the secret society demon, the Chinese made the Straits Settlements the happy hunting-ground of all those societies forbidden in their own country. But in the Malay States it was different. From the very first these guilds, these centres of crime and oppression, with powers of combination for revolt against every form of government, were absolutely forbidden, and in Perak it was for many years a capital offence to belong to any such organisation. Under present conditions the Chinese are the bone

and sinew of the Malay States. They are the labourers, the miners, the principal shopkeepers, the contractors, the capitalists, the holders of the revenue farms, the contributors of almost the whole of the revenue ; we cannot do without them.

The Hindu, the Tamil, the native of Southern India, is, by comparison, a poor thing ; oily in body, cringing in demeanour, and maddening in speech. But for all that he is very useful, whether as a labourer on a plantation, a cattle keeper and cart driver, a washerman, or a barber. The Malay States would be glad to get more of these people ; and they have this advantage over the Chinese, that while the Indian women and children emigrate with the men of the family, the Chinese do not. Out of a population of, say, 200,000 Chinese, there are only 3000 women.

The stewardship of British officers in the Malay States has lasted for twenty-five years, and it may be interesting to enumerate some of the visible results of their " advice," which is now, with greater candour, admitted to be control.

X One hundred and seventy-five miles of railway have been built and equipped with rolling-stock, out of current revenues ; and extensions, aggregating much the same mileage, are, as already stated, now



under construction, and should be completed in 1902. This seems a small achievement, dawdling and slow beyond belief; but neither the city of London nor the War Office has taken any interest worth speaking of in the Malay Peninsula, and, so far, there has been a total absence of that rivalry with foreign powers which seems to add a special value to some remote countries, without any very evident attractions of their own. Therefore the Malay States have had to rely upon their own resources, and, first, to provide funds to meet the ordinary expenses of government, after satisfying the reasonable demands of a number of native chiefs; secondly, to construct roads, public buildings, and other necessary works; and, lastly, to find a surplus from the annual revenues with which to build railways. It is only now that a comparatively insignificant sum has been borrowed to push on the railways a trifle more rapidly than would otherwise have been possible. More than half the cost of the present extensions must be supplied from general revenues. More than 2000 miles of excellent roads and 1000 miles of telegraphs have been made and paid for out of revenue. Five important schemes of waterworks have been completed, and much has been done for irrigation, on which it

is intended to spend about \$700,000 in one district. Lighthouses have been erected, wharves provided, prisons, hospitals, schools, barracks, and handsome public offices constructed. A trigonometrical survey of the Western States is being pushed on, public gardens have been laid out, and museums instituted. A good deal has been spent on experimental agriculture, and the States are alive to the immense importance of encouraging all forms of permanent and profitable cultivation.

Some figures will best illustrate the rapid advancement and present importance of the States. The first year of which it is possible to give any statistics is 1875, and on the opposite page is the record of revenue, at intervals of five years, down to 1895, with the actual returns for 1898.

The combined revenues of the four States amounted, last year, to over \$9,000,000, and for the present year they will exceed \$11,000,000, which means that, in the time British Residents have controlled the finances of the Protected States, they have succeeded in increasing the revenues over twenty-fold, and Ceylon is now the only English Crown colony which can show higher figures. The principal revenue is derived from an *ad valorem* export duty on tin (five-sixths of the world's pro-

A NEW METHOD

	1875.	1880.	1885.	1890.	1895.	1898.
Perak . . . . .	\$ 226,233	\$ 582,496	\$ 1,522,085	\$ 2,504,116	\$ 4,033,611	\$ 4,575,842
Selangor . . . . .	115,651	215,614	566,411	1,888,928	3,805,211	3,862,439
Sungei Ujong . . . . .	67,405	83,800	120,214	277,910	} 535,442	701,334
Negri Sembilan . . . . .	...	...	...	107,033		
Pahang . . . . .	...	...	...	62,077	106,743	224,852
Total . . . . .	409,289	881,910	2,208,710	4,840,064	8,481,007	9,304,467

duce of that metal coming from the Malay States), and an import duty on opium. Then there are the excise farms; land rents, which give about half a million dollars annually; and the railway receipts, amounting to one and a quarter million of dollars. Stamps, court fees, and so on, make up the balance.

The trade of the Federated States is worth more than sixty millions of dollars annually, and it is made up of real imports consumed, and real exports produced, in the States. That is a fact which is of some importance to the British manufacturer and consumer.

One source of wealth and revenue is still undeveloped, but it may exceed all others in value, and attract to the Malay Peninsula the European capital and enterprise of which it has so far seen comparatively little. I allude to the mining of gold. The industry is one which has been followed by natives for centuries, but their rude methods were unable to deal with deep mining in rock. For nearly ten years a few companies have been at work in Pahang, where they have had great difficulties to contend against; but, in some cases, these have been overcome, and the reward of patience, skill, devotion, and energy is in sight.

Planting on any considerable scale is in European

hands, and every possible encouragement is given to those willing to devote their money and abilities to agricultural enterprises. But with this exception, and that of a very few mining ventures, the development of the Malay States is the outcome of native capital, native labour, and native energy, fostered, directed, and encouraged by the officers of Government. That is one of the peculiar features of the administrative experiment I have tried to describe. The success of that experiment is due, in a very unusual degree, to the enthusiasm, energy, ability, and devotion of the Government servants throughout the Federation. It would, I believe, be difficult to find anywhere a body of men who have more fully given the best of all they had to the service of their employer, and the Malay States have been fortunate in securing men who have taken a pride in their work, and while they had to "scorn delights and live laborious days," were satisfied if they could show that the district, the department, the charge—whatever it might be—was developing, in material progress or efficiency, while in their hands. This applies to civil servants of all classes, of all nationalities, and I am specially glad to think how many Malays are included in that category. A healthy rivalry, between the States and between

officers, undoubtedly gave the spur to many a man depressed by isolation, harassed by the manifold nature of his tasks, and wearied by the deadly enervation of the climate. That was mainly in the early days ; things are easier and life more comfortable now, though there are still some very solitary stations. A good many of those who began the work are dead, and a good many have gone—invalided, or to seek better prospects ; but, to speak collectively of those who remain, there is amongst them the same spirit, the same earnest desire to “make” the Malay States, that ever there was ; and there is a vast deal more experience and knowledge of how the business of government ought to be carried on in all its branches. Withal, I believe, there is just as high a standard of honour and honesty amongst the European officers of the Protected Malay States as in any other society of English public servants.

There are two roads to possession and power, there may be more, but there are two at least : one is by force of arms and the “mailed hand,”—the other is by force of character and the exercise of certain qualities which compel respect and even sometimes win affection. Of the two, any one who has tried both knows which most appeals to him. Conquest and physical mastery is, to most

healthy-minded Englishmen, the finest game in all the world, and, to those who have had the luck to take part in it, a really good fight is the acme of man's enjoyment. The grim excitement of war, the thrill of battle, the quickening pride of race, the inspiring traditions of heroism and sacrifice, the shock of arms, and the ecstasy of victory, which shouts in delirious joy lest it should choke with unexpected tears—appeal to instincts higher than those of the mere savage. It is an experience to live for, worth dying for; with reward, and fame, and praise, following hard upon the heels of success.

The other, the more excellent way, lacks in brilliance, in scenic effect, in excitement, and often in recognition, much of what the first possesses. The history of successful conquest may be the record of a day's decisive fight. British influence in Malaya, the influence of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, began with a military expedition which attracted small attention, for it cost the country little in blood and nothing in treasure. The expedition was punitive, and what was required was done quickly and effectually. For what has been achieved since, the qualities required were courage and resource, combined with a tireless energy, sympathy with the people of the land, their customs and

prejudices, and that enthusiasm for the work entrusted to them, that determination to compel success, which is characteristic of the class which sends its sons to the uttermost parts of the earth to preach the gospel of freedom, justice, and British methods of administration.

It is obvious that this is no place to mention the names of officers who have been, or are now in the service of the Malay Governments. Those who know anything of the modern history of the States will no more forget what was done for them by Governors Sir Frederick Weld and Sir Cecil Smith, than they will that Sir Andrew Clarke initiated the whole policy of British protection, and that, both federation and the railway loan were sanctioned during the government of Sir Charles Mitchell, the first High Commissioner for the Malay States. Of all that has been done, and of all that will hereafter be done, the greatest achievement of British influence in Malaya is the enormous improvement in the condition of the Malays themselves. They are freer, healthier, wealthier, more independent, more enlightened—happier by far than in the days of Malay rule. Therein is cause for real satisfaction. It is not only that the country has prospered under British guidance, not only that it has roads and



railways, telegraphs, hospitals, schools, and many other signs of progress, but it is that, in bringing about the marvellous change that has taken place, the advisers have gained the real good-will of the people of the land. The chiefs have been propitiated, and proper allowances have been allotted to them while they have shared, in a greater or less degree in everything that has been done. The rulers and their chiefs do not feel that they have been set aside or ignored ; indeed, as a matter of fact, there are, at this moment, a good many more Malays holding high offices of State than there were in 1874. It is not only an honour and distinction to be nominated to such an office, but, besides a title, it gives the holder a sense of power, of having a part in the government of the country, and that is a Malay's highest ambition. Moreover, every such office is remunerated in accordance with ancient custom, and, in the selection of those who shall hold these posts, the ruler and his Malay advisers have practically a free hand. It is difficult to over-estimate the value of thus securing the influence and good-will of the Malay ruling class. The men chosen for these offices are not always the most intelligent or the most reputable members of the community, but they always have claims and influence.

The Malay *raiyats* have gained the right to live, to be free, to be as all other men in the sight of the law. Their lands are their own; their wives and children are subject to no man's beck or call; their service can no longer be requisitioned without wage, or the produce of their labour seized without payment. Not a single necessary of their lives is taxed. † The guiding principle of Malay life is, "sufficient for the day," and improvidence is the heritage of the people. Therefore, their cares are fewer, and their enjoyment possibly greater, than is the case with the same class in other countries. As there is no longer anything to interfere with the safe-keeping of all that they can gain, it is possible that they will begin to develop the spirit of acquisitiveness.

Consideration for the Malays—as the people of the soil and the owners of the country—has been set before all other considerations, in the evolution of the residential system. In impressing that rule upon the minds of his officers, and insisting upon its observance, no single individual was so earnest as Sir Hugh Low, who for the twelve years, 1877–1889, was British Resident in Perak. His advice, control—call it what you will—was given at the most critical period of the recent history of the most

important of the Malay States. What Perak owes to his administration, and the other States to his example, is not likely to be soon forgotten.

The work that was begun by Sir Andrew Clarke, and continued by his successors in office, while the details were being worked out by Sir Hugh Low and his fellow-Residents, is interesting enough in itself—interesting as any unique experiment must be. But, behind it all, is the knowledge that those who have done little or much in the cause, have been working together to extend and consolidate the scheme, planned by Stamford Raffles, to firmly establish a great and free trading station in the Straits of Malacca, and to extend British influence, as far as it could be made to reach, in every direction, from that point of vantage.

## A STORM EFFECT

I N the Malay Peninsula, about the sixth parallel of north latitude, there are some small States nominally under the suzerainty of Siam. These States are well in the Malay Peninsula, they are governed by Malays, and I say they are *nominally* under the suzerainty of Siam, because the Siamese overran this part of the Peninsula about a century ago, and do not seem to have done much since then, either to establish their authority, to advance the interests of these provinces, or to improve the moral or material condition of their people. So far the benefits derived from over a hundred years of Siamese influence, in what used to be the Malay State of Patâni, but is now divided into a series of small districts under petty chiefs, have been confined to the very occasional visits of a Siamese official, the interference of the Bangkok Government whenever a European sought any mining or other privilege, and the claim to deal with questions of

succession to the chief posts of authority. These matters, it may be said, usually lead to the transfer of sums of money, from persons interested in the States to other persons interested in the transfer.

Some years ago, an English company held a concession to work galena in one of the States under Siamese influence. The enterprise was carried on for a considerable time, but ended in failure, for reasons that need not to be entered into here. The undertaking never assumed very large proportions, or promised any great success; but the company kept a number of Chinese labourers employed on the works, with one or more Europeans to superintend the business. As usually happens, when forest is first cleared in order to start some new enterprise, the galena mines were not over healthy, and a good many of the labourers (coolies, as they are called here) died.

Every one knows that the Chinese are a peculiar people, and a good deal might be written to illustrate their peculiarities, in even such an insignificant case as the working of a galena mine, under European direction, in the Malay Peninsula. However, it may be briefly stated, as a fact, that even so small an undertaking as this one, employing not more than a

hundred and fifty Chinese in all, will probably have amongst them men coming from two, three, or more different districts in China, speaking different dialects that amount to different languages, belonging to different tribes and different secret societies; ready at the shortest notice, and for the smallest reason, to beat each other into jelly, by individuals, or to enter, in bodies, upon a war of extermination. The man who is carpenter or blacksmith at a mine will have nothing in common with the coolies, and none of these will be able to understand the speech, or sympathise with the aspirations, of the gardener or the house servant: and yet all are Chinese.

These elementary facts are stated, merely to explain how it was that, at this particular galena mine, the manager had made a contract, with a party of Hok-kien Chinese, that they should bury every dead Chinese coolie, at the uniform and moderate rate of two and a half dollars (then about seven shillings and sixpence) "per tail."

Chinese coolies live in parties of ten, twenty, forty, fifty, a hundred, or even more, in a large and lofty shed, the roof and walls of which are made of palm leaves. The floor is of earth, there is no ceiling and, usually, no windows. There are door spaces, but no doors to close them. Sometimes the eaves come

down rather low, and there are no walls at all. The roof is supported on posts, and the ground within the shed is covered by very rough, wooden bed-places, made to carry a mat. Over each of these a thick mosquito curtain hangs, night and day, by strings from the roof. A Chinese pillow and blanket constitute the other trappings of this primitive bed.

When a coolie dies, the processes of laying out, of conveyance to the burial ground, and planting in the earth, are simplicity itself. Some one sleeping near becomes alive to the fact that his neighbour is dead. The headman of the shed is informed, and perhaps he looks at the corpse. Then word is sent to the burial contractor (where matters are arranged on that footing), and he despatches three or five men to dispose of the corpse.

The strings of the mosquito-net are cut, and the curtain falls on the body. Then the mat is folded over it, from one side and the other, the ends are turned over, the whole is tied with a cord, and the parcel is ready for removal. If the burial party consists of five men, the shoulders or head of the corpse are slung to one carrying stick, the feet to another. The bearers walk two to each stick, and literally run away with their burden; the fifth man jogging on in front with a lighted *cholok*, a slender stick of

incense, that smoulders under almost any conditions of weather.

The galena mine was situated in rather low, marshy land. The Chinese burial-ground was on a neighbouring hill, reached by a wide cart track passing through rocky ground, clear of jungle. Along this road, one day, a contract burial party was carrying the body of one of the company's labourers. It was about 2 P.M., and the morning had been excessively hot with that heat which tells so clearly of an atmosphere charged with electricity. As the party came in sight, the air was stifling, and not a leaf stirred. Half the sky was as molten brass, while the other half was covered by a gigantic black rain-cloud, which had appeared within the last half-hour. Suddenly there was a blinding flash of lightning, and a simultaneous clatter of deafening thunder, followed, almost immediately, by a few enormous splashes of rain. The burial party staggered for a moment, but held on, rather increasing its pace. The sunlight vanished, and a blast of wind suddenly rushed down the road, tearing the leaves from the trees, and whirling a cloud of dust before it. Another flash of lightning, which seemed to strike the earth at their feet, another deafening peal of thunder, and then a deluge of rain; a kind of water-spout



which hissed over the road, and beat on the sand and gravel till they jumped several inches from the ground. That was too much for the burial party, in their exceedingly light clothing; so, without ceremony, they dropped their burden in the middle of the road, and rushed to the shelter of an overhanging rock, which stood a few yards away on their left.

Whilst the bearers sit, smoking and chattering under their rock, the storm wastes its fury on the hillside. For ten minutes the sheet of rain is rent by successive flashes of lightning that blind the eyes, and the dazzling electric fluid plays, close round the corpse, in vivid blue streams and forks of fire, intensifying the gloom of those short intervals made dark by the ceaseless downpour of floods of water, which seem to be thrown viciously to scourge the earth. The roar and rattle of thunder is almost ceaseless; while the lightning is so close that its peculiar crackling sound is, every now and then, distinctly heard. The road is a river. The water beats angrily against the dead man's head, divides into two streams, which swirl round his sides, and, uniting below the obstruction, dash down the road, tearing it into great holes, and—sweeping gravel, pebbles, and fair-sized boulders in their head-

long course—rush down the hill to swell a neighbouring torrent.

Gradually the fury of the elements abates ; there are longer intervals between the flashes of lightning ; the thunder is deeper, has more volume, and rolls into a re-echoing distance. The violence of the rain decreases, it no longer whips the ground, and, as the thick downpour diminishes, the curtain of darkness rises somewhat, and gusts of wind blow wisps of water in every direction. A glint of sunshine strikes across the hill, but disappears, as fast-driven clouds again shut out the light. One of these inky blacknesses, from which occasionally darts a zigzag of blue flame, is moving away down wind, and, in the now wider intervals between the grumbling of the thunder, can be heard the hiss of the retreating rain storm.

All this time—perhaps half-an-hour or less—the dead man has lain where he was dropped, in the middle of the road. There he is now, but something extraordinary has happened to him, for, when the coolies threw him down, in their haste to get to shelter, his body lay straight and stiff enough, rolled in its simple shroud of mosquito curtain, with the thin grass mat for all its coffin. The bundle has not only been exposed to the full violence of

the storm, but, for a considerable time, it lay in a river of pitilessly cold rain-water. The corpse is in the same place still ; but, by some miracle, instead of lying out stark and straight, it seems to be sitting up. For the half towards the hill, that is the upper half of the body, is now at right angles to the lower half, this attitude having been gained after many ineffectual wriggles in the mud of the still streaming road.

That black cloud is disappearing over a distant jungle, and the sun is again flooding forest and hill-side, rock and road, with an intense and blinding glory ; turning the scattered rearguard of the rain storm into a shower of golden dew-drops. The road literally blazes with light, in the surrounding green, and, drawn by the sun's heat, a cloud of steam is already rising from it. The wreaths of vapour are caught by a faint breeze, and, as they sweep across the road, are wafted lightly round that half-bent mat, and absorbed into the shimmering atmosphere.

The members of the burial party, having consumed a large number of straw cigarettes, loaded with infinitesimal quantities of Chinese tobacco, having abused their masters, complained of the insufficiency of their wages, and detailed their more

recent escapades, come forth from the rock with the carrying sticks, to seek their burden, complete their task, and earn the two and a half dollars, of which very little more than half will fall to their share. As the first man comes up, and realises that the corpse has taken upon itself to assume an entirely new attitude, he is for a moment speechless with astonishment. Only for a moment, however; the bare idea of a dead man, half-way to the burial ground, sitting up, and as it were coming to life again, after one has taken the trouble to set him so far on his way, is a liberty not to be put up with for a moment. Coolie number one exclaims: "Ah! you miserable son of a misguided mother! you would, would you—take that!" Suiting the action to the word, he swings the heavy carrying stick through the air, and brings it down, with a resounding thud, on the erect portion of the mat. Something like a groan comes from the inside of the bundle, and the thing sways over. To help it along, coolie number two gives it another double-handed blow, screaming at the top of his voice, "You would give us all that trouble for nothing, would you, you accursed wretch; may pigs uproot your uncoffined body, and wild dogs worry your bones."

The half of the bundle that was upright is now

on the ground, and, while all the members of the party strain their vocabularies to find suitable terms of abuse for so thoroughly abandoned a scoundrel as this Cantonese-come-to-life, the sticks are kept plying on the mat, and change hands several times in the operation, in order that every one may have an opportunity of showing his contempt for a thing that would try to play such a scurvy trick on a party of honest workmen.

The mat seems to give a convulsive wriggle or two, but before the blows of the carrying sticks cease, the bundle has, for all practical purposes, resumed the shape and position it had before the thunder storm worked its most inconvenient miracle. When the coffin is once more slung, and the burial party is ready to start afresh, the only real difference is, that there is a wet, red stain on the under side of that end of the bundle which contains the head of the corpse.

The odd man lights an incense taper and takes his place at the head of the party; the bearers settle their sticks comfortably on their shoulders, and, an instant later, the five men are swinging along the road, at that peculiar jog-trot, invariably adopted by Chinese carrying a heavy load with a stick.

After the storm, everything seems intensified. The sun shines with superb brilliancy, the sky is radiantly blue, the clouds are marvellously white. The greens of the forest are deeper and of the grass more intensely emerald; the shadows of rock and tree are sharper, the songs of the birds clearer, the crickets scream more shrilly in the grass, the croak of the frogs is hoarser than an hour ago. Nature smiles, and the hearts of the burial party are glad—not because they are in sympathy with nature, but because the burial-ground is in sight, and they have almost earned their reward. If the road is stained, at uncertain intervals, by crimson blood-clots that sometimes dye the feet of the bearers, the fact does not interfere with the certainty that the galena mining company will pay two dollars and a half for the contract burial.

## A SILVER-POINT

WHEN Fate took me to Langat, in the Malay State of Selangor, and left me to reside with his Highness the Sultan of Selangor, I was suddenly thrust into a state of society so peculiar, that I have never since met with anything that at all resembled life in the tottering dwellings of Bandar Těrmâsa, the City of Festivals.<sup>1</sup> Though I have referred to the place before, it merits a rather more particular attention than I then gave it; for it has already ceased to exist, and there is no one but myself to recall its peculiarities.

Imagine a long, winding river, rising in a distant chain of mountains and hurrying towards the sea; but, when still twenty-five or thirty miles from its mouth, and while flowing through a flat, jungle-covered plain (uninhabited, except for a very few tiny riverine hamlets at long distances apart), the

<sup>1</sup> Not the rendering I should give, but the one supplied to me by the Viceroy of the Sultan of Selangor.

river makes a wide bend towards the coast. Just at the apex of the bend, a few years before the time I write of, a narrow ditch, a couple of hundred yards in length, had joined this river with a deep and wide tidal inlet, seven miles in length. Up this inlet the rising tide rushed with extraordinary violence, cutting down the soft mud banks and sweeping great jungle trees many feet into the stream. Reaching the sea-end of the short ditch, the tide poured through the narrow cutting into the wide river channel beyond, where it had room enough to expend its strength, driving before it the waters of the river, both up-stream and down. For an hour or two, before the flood reached its highest, the tidal influence became felt in the longer stream, and, by both avenues, the waters of the sea were forced into the upper reaches of the river. Then the tide turned, and all the immense body of water sought the shortest and easiest channel back to the Straits of Malacca. A swirling, turbid mass of dark, eddying water raced back again to the sea, tearing wide the narrow ditch, hurrying trees and logs and all the varied jungle growth out to, and beyond, the wide mud flats of the mangrove-bound coast. In a very few years the connecting ditch had disappeared. The short inlet joined the long river ; and, where



but recently had been dry land, a British gun-vessel found water enough to carry it from the river, through the inlet, out to sea. Ascending the long Langat River, this somewhat curious fact would then be noted—that, having had the tide against you for many miles, it would suddenly be found in your favour, for perhaps three or four miles, until the entrance to the short inlet was reached. But, still continuing up the river, the tide would again be against you, and running with increased violence, in its hurry to get down the shorter channel. That shorter channel is called the Jugra River, and in the angle made by the meeting of the two streams stood “the City of Festivals.” A more hopelessly desolate spot than Bandar Těrmâsa could not, I think, be found in all the Peninsula; and yet, it was here that the Sultan of Selangor had chosen to build himself a habitation of, for those days, a somewhat pretentious order.

The house was raised from the muddy ground on short brick pillars; it was built of squared timbers, and the roof was tiled. A portion of the surrounding ground, covered by rank grass and low bushes, was enclosed by a stout fence, and a strong gate barred the entrance to this enclosure. To right and left of this house were a dozen or so of miser-

able hovels, dignified by the title of shops. Their backs were towards the river, their fronts faced a narrow, greasy path cut through the swamp. The exact corner, made by the junction of the streams, contained a few scattered huts in a grove of melancholy and diseased coco-nuts, and a long stockade, with walls of timber and a palm-thatched roof, commanded the Langat River. The aforesaid path, the only semblance of a road in the district, ran from the Sultan's gate to the stockade. About fifty yards back from that path was another plank house, on wooden piles, with a thatched roof, and in that house, which contained three rooms, I lived for twelve months—the only white man in Selangor.

My dwelling stood in a mud swamp, covered by rank grass and low bushes. Twice in every twenty-four hours the tide overflowed the ground, and I tried, by cutting some ditches, to keep the water from under the house. In the season I could, and did, shoot snipe out of the window. My companions were a young *brok* (the monkey which can be trained to climb coco-nut trees and gather any nut that is wanted) and a curious sea-bird that stalked about the ditches, and—when they did not produce enough food to satisfy its insatiable hunger—hunted, caught, and ate my smallest chickens. I

did not altogether believe my cook, when he thus accounted for the disappearance of my only live stock; but one day, hearing a great commotion, I looked out and saw the cook chasing the sea-bird with a saucepan. The bird had long, yellow legs, and was making the best use he could of them, but the cook was gaining on him, when the bird rose at a small hedge and cleared it. The effort, however, was sufficient to make him open his bill and discharge a half-fledged chicken, which ran for a few feet and then tumbled down dead. The robber made good his escape, while the cook vainly tried to resuscitate his unfortunate charge.

Close behind my house there was a good snipe ground; a swamp, where a man would sink to his knees, in black mud, at every step. It was generally occupied by a herd of semi-wild buffaloes, belonging to the Sultan, and, when out snipe-shooting, it was wise to keep at least one eye on the buffaloes. They dislike white people, and the length and pointedness of their horns, the uncanny way in which they lay them back, flat on their shoulders, while they set their wet noses at the stranger, roll their eyes and snort in a very alarming fashion, suggest the most gruesome eventualities.

My nearest neighbour was a Raja, who, shortly before my arrival, had constituted himself the tracker, captor, accuser, and judge of three debt-slaves, who had run away from the house of the Sultan of the country. The system of debt-slavery (a position of serfdom entailed by inability to pay a real or imaginary debt to some powerful chief) used to be a great institution in Malaya, and the tortures suffered by the unhappy victims were almost incredible. Three so-called debt-slaves—a boy and two girls, all under twenty years of age—had escaped from the house and custody of the Sultan, and run away. They were pursued and caught by my neighbour, who brought them back to his own hut on the river bank, a hundred yards above my dwelling.

The boy was taken into a field and *kris*-ed—*i.e.* stabbed to death with the national weapon, the wavy, snake-like *kris*.

It was not the custom to *kris* girls, so my neighbour's wife called the two runaways to accompany her to the river, where she was going to bathe. They did so, and followed her on to a log, which stretched from the shore out into the stream. There they were seized, and one was held, while a retainer took the other by the hair, pushed her

into the river, and, still holding her hair, pressed her head under water with his foot till she was drowned. The other girl, a compulsory spectator of the scene, was similarly treated, as soon as they had time to attend to her. The corpses were left lying on the muddy bank, for the refection or refusal of crocodiles, till friends came and removed them.

I was told that my neighbour went to the Sultan, and sought credit for his zeal, saying, "I have got rid of those children who ran away." But the Sultan expressed his displeasure, and my neighbour, a man of rank and authority, in a fit of disgust and unwonted generosity, provided winding-sheets for the corpses.

The immediate cause of my residence in the City of Festivals was a piracy. A Malacca boat, trading to the Jugra inlet, had been attacked by a party of Langat Malays, who killed (as they thought) every one on board, ransacked the vessel, and, after a sufficient interval, were supposed to have visited Malacca. One man had saved his life by jumping overboard and clinging to the rudder, till darkness enabled him to swim ashore and make his way back to Malacca. There he reported the occurrence, and when the Langat men arrived they were promptly arrested. The British Admiral on the China Station

visited Jugra, with a portion of his fleet, and the men who had been arrested were there and then tried, condemned—on the evidence of the sole survivor—and duly executed at the mouth of the river, in sight of the spot where the crime was committed.

The Sultan described the piracy as “boy’s play,” but sent his own *kris* to be used in carrying out the death-sentence on the unhappy condemned.

I had not been very long in Langat before I ascertained, without much doubt, that none of those executed had had any hand in the piracy, but the lesson was made thereby all the more forcible.

We all know that with people who have no political institutions, there is nothing so impressive as the incontinent execution of a few innocent persons. It is a warning not only to the naughtily-inclined, but also to the quite, quite good; to the intriguer and the agitator, as well as to the thief. At any rate that was the effect produced in Bandar Těrmāsa.

Another distinguishing feature of the place was the fashion of its love-making, which certainly would have caused surprise in any other part of Malaya. The girls made assignations with their swains, and met them, but never alone, in the dead of night, in the darkest and most inaccessible spots,

where a few minutes' conversation, a stolen caress, would elsewhere have been thought a poor reward for the risks run. And the risk was real enough, for in those days the stroller by night in the City of Festivals always carried a naked weapon, and, if he met another man, was apt to strike first, and then seek for explanations. The younger women resorted to weapons for the settlement of their quarrels, and a girl would stab a rival, or a faithless lover, as soon as not. Indeed, there were but two things of any account in unregenerate Langat—courage and money. It followed, naturally enough, that the business of the place was piracy, its serious pleasure love-making—legitimate or otherwise, but mainly otherwise—and its lighter recreations gambling, opium-smoking, and duelling. The impression left on my memory is of mud, mosquitoes, and immorality.

About two hundred yards on the sea side of the Sultan's enclosure there lived a foreign Malay, styled the Dato' Dâgang—that is to say, "the chief of the foreigners"—foreigner in this case meaning, generally, Malays of Sumatra.

The Dato' Dâgang was supposed to be a *persona gratissima* with the Sultan, and he seemed to me to lose no opportunity of ingratiating himself with His

Highness. He was a man of about thirty-five years of age, with a manner not common to the Malays of the Peninsula, and I soon found that he was cordially disliked by the Langat community. He had travelled, and seen white people, both Dutch and English. He seemed so anxious to flatter, to make himself pleasant, and to express his unbounded admiration for Europeans, that he did not inspire me with much confidence, and I shared the dislike the people of the place felt for him. This feeling was not lessened when I found that he was always trying, behind my back, to persuade the Sultan not to take my advice.

The Dato' Dâgang had a satellite, whom I fancied even less than the planet. This was a certain Haji, from Malacca, a tall, thin old man, with a stereotyped smile, the language of what is known as a "sea-lawyer," and an evident desire to be out of the way when there was likely to be trouble.

Besides these two there were some curious people in the place, both male and female, but they were not concerned in the present story. I must, however, refer to one of them, an old gentleman called Tuan Sheikh Mat Ali, a sainted person, skilled in the Muhammadan doctrine, a teacher of young men, and, when occasion required, a man of war of some



repute. This ancient warrior had attached himself to me, for some reason or other, and was for the time one of my followers, living in the stockade with my police guard.

Though Tuan Sheikh was but little less than a hundred years old, he had recently married the daughter of the Dato' Bandar, of the neighbouring State of Sungei Ujong, and as that old gentleman had taken up arms against another chief who enjoyed British protection, the Bandar's village had been burned, and with it the house and considerable property belonging to my friend, his ancient son-in-law.

These details are necessary for a proper understanding of my story. I am also obliged to explain that the small State of Sungei Ujong was ruled by two kings, of whom the Dato' Bandar was one, and a chief called the Dato' Klana was the other. The people called them the Water Chief and the Land Chief respectively; their offices were partly hereditary, partly elective; and they were supposed to share between them the government of the State.

In his hopeless struggle against British troops and blue-jackets, the Dato' Bandar had been assisted by the most famous fighting man in all the Peninsula, a certain Raja Haji; and when the old man

had fled, and his stronghold was no longer tenable, Raja Haji followed his host to Bandar Těrmâsa. I had seen the old man once in his own village, and as the relations between him and his fellow-king were then very strained, the nature of my reception was a matter of considerable doubt. I was the first white man to seek him in his own home, whither I was driven by hunger and weariness. British sympathy was already committed to his rival, and I had only two or three Malays with me. But the old man was cynically friendly, though hardly cordial, and I spent a night in a hut within his stockade. Very shortly afterwards he was attacked, compelled to fly, and his village was burned.

I had never seen Raja Haji, though his name was almost as great a terror in the Peninsula as once was that of the Black Douglas in the north. When the Raja arrived in Langat, I sent a message to him, and he came to see me. Then, and subsequently through messengers, I tried my best to persuade him to accompany me to Singapore, and give himself up to the Governor, promising that his life should not be endangered thereby. I also sent many messages to the Dato' Bandar with the same intent, as it was of great importance to secure these two men and prevent further trouble.

Whilst these negotiations were going on, and success or failure depended almost on the turn of a hair, the Dato' Dâgang visited me, and said his guest, the Dato' Bandar, was a very wicked, ungrateful, and stingy old man, who neither recognised the sacrifices made by his host nor the trouble I was taking on his behalf. He added that, in spite of the old man's bad heart and stubborn nature, he hoped to bring him to a proper sense of his obligations, and he would see me again. Shortly afterwards the Dato' Dâgang sought another interview with me, and before he came my old friend the Sheikh told me what he would say, and the object of the visit.

When the Dato' arrived he explained that at last his guest had, by his arguments, been convinced of the error of his ways, and wished to see me and thank me for all the trouble I had taken, and was taking, on his behalf. He knew that, amongst other things, I had walked thirty miles through the jungle to try and save his village from attack, but I had been just too late, and had my walk for nothing. Now, he said, the old man was prepared to accompany me to Singapore, but, first, I must see him privately, as he had something important to say to me. The Dato' proposed, therefore, that I should go

some miles down the river, to an uninhabited spot, which he indicated, and there, he said, I should find him and his guest. He impressed upon me the necessity of going alone, and saying nothing about the real object of the journey.

Knowing what was behind this proposal, knowing also that I could not then afford to quarrel with the man who could prevent his guest going with me to Singapore, and desiring, above all, that he should not be able to misrepresent me to the Dato' Bandar, I consented to the proposal, on the single condition that I should take Tuan Sheikh Mat Ali with me. At first the Dato' Dâgang objected, but when I declined absolutely to meet him without a reliable witness (though I did not give that as my reason for taking the Sheikh), he reluctantly agreed.

I had a fast Malay rowing boat, manned by Singapore Malays whom I could trust, and in that Tuan Sheikh and I made our way to the rendezvous at 2 P.M. The spot chosen was a lonely reach of the Jugra inlet, a melancholy stretch of water enclosed by jungle-covered mud banks. Many of the trees, having slipped into the dark, turbid waters of the stream, were standing upright in the water, while the branches swayed and rocked in the rushing tide.

As we rounded a bend we saw another boat

coming towards us, and this contained the Dato' Dâgang and his satellite, the Malacca Haji, with the ancient Dato' Bandar sitting in the place of honour. At their suggestion, we pulled in towards the bank, and, as the two boats came close alongside each other, our crews held on to the branches of some half-submerged trees.

Once comfortably arranged, and the usual greetings over, the Dato' Dâgang cleared his throat, and began a long harangue. He explained that his friend and guest, the Dato' Bandar, had been looking for a site on the river bank where he could build himself a house, when, by my assistance, he returned from Singapore. He then proceeded to enumerate all the benefits I was supposed to have already conferred on the old man, and all he hoped still to obtain; and he wound up a very long speech by saying, that the Dato' wished to show his gratitude for all the trouble I had taken in his behalf, by giving me a thousand dollars, and that, if I could obtain permission for him to return to Langat, he would make it twenty thousand.

At this point two or three men lifted up a great sack, which, by its weight, and the jangle it made as they deposited it in my boat, evidently contained silver coin.

The satellite wagged his head, and said, "Right, right," and the refugee smiled a half imbecile, half enigmatic smile, and said nothing.

Addressing the Dato' Bandar, I asked him whether the speaker had correctly stated his wishes, and he said, "Yes; quite correctly."

"Is there a thousand dollars in that sack?" I asked.

"Yes, sir," he replied.

"And you really wish to give it to me?"

"Certainly."

"And you will add another nineteen thousand dollars, directly you come back, if you are allowed to leave Singapore?"

"Yes."

"Well," I said, "I knew all that before I came here, but as I had not seen you, and only had it on the authority of the Dato' Dâgang, I wanted to hear from you whether it was true or not. I also wished to say something to you that might not reach you, unless you heard it from me."

The smile had died on the lips of the old man, but it seemed to be taking a permanent and rather ugly form on the faces of the Dato' Dâgang and his friend as I continued.

"You are an old man," I said, "and I have seen you once, and am probably the only white man you

ever met. You don't know our customs, and I can't blame you for doing what seems to you something quite natural. All the same, by whatever name you call it, you are offering me a bribe, and that is an insult to a white man, and I'm sure you won't repeat it. With these two men it is different, because they are quite accustomed to the ways of white men, and they know that they have persuaded you to do something that is entirely hateful to any honest man. Lest they should afterwards lie about it, I brought your son-in-law, Tuan Sheikh, to be a witness of what took place."

Then I said to my boatmen, "Put the sack back again." With a will, and with grins that were scarcely seemly, the boatmen seized the sack and threw it back into the Dato's boat, where it fell with a great clatter.

Turning to the old man, I said, "I know it was not your thought to do this thing, and, if you will come with me to Singapore, I will do what I can for you, and perhaps you will be allowed to return, but of that I know nothing. Good-bye." Then we pushed off, and without any salutation to my enemy and his satellite, both of whom looked exceedingly crestfallen, we set the nose of the boat up-stream, and were soon out of their sight.

The old Sheikh had, so far, never opened his mouth ; but, once out of ear-shot of the other party, he remarked, "If that man were a good Muham-madan he could not live after hearing what you said." My boatmen were very facetious at the expense of the Dato' and his Haji friend, and their high spirits made them pull so well, that we returned in half the time it had taken us to reach the rendezvous.

That evening, about 7 P.M., and quite dark, I was reading in my hut, when I heard a premonitory cough, and the Dato' Dâgang came slowly and carefully up the steps, across the veranda, and into the room where I was sitting.

I confess I was surprised, and far from pleased to see the Dato', and I gave him anything but a cordial welcome, as I asked him to sit down and tell me to what fortunate circumstance I owed this visit.

He looked carefully round, as though to see if there were any one concealed in the gloom of my ill-lighted room, and then said, "You were quite right to-day, and I was stupid. There were far too many people present, and you could not do otherwise than decline the Dato' Bandar's gift. But now it is dark, there is no one here, and I have brought



the money. My servant has carried it, and he waits at the foot of your steps." In the indifferent light cast by the single lamp from out the room I could dimly see the form of a man, with a sack on his shoulder, standing at the foot of the steps.

This last move of my enemy was almost more than could be borne, and I had the strongest desire to run at him and send him headlong down the steps to join his henchman. Fortunately, I did not follow my inclination, for I never lost sight of my real object, and the fact that this man would enjoy nothing so much as my failure. As we were alone, I did not pretend to conceal my anger, and I said, "You are taking advantage of the fact that I am a stranger in this country, and the guest of the Sultan. But you also are a foreigner, and in the face of the insult you have done me, there is no need for me to pick my words. I wish never to see you in my house again, and advise you to leave it while you may."

There was a table between us, and the Dato' was next the door. It seemed to me that he was very quickly outside, and I don't remember that he wished me good-bye. He went out of the lamplight into the darkness, followed by a shadowy form, bearing on its shoulder a heavy sack, which, I had no doubt, contained the thousand dollars.

That, of course, ought to be the end of my story, but it is not.

The same evening, while I was at dinner, my friend the Sheikh came and told me the Dato' Dâgang had gone from my house to the stockade, where the Sheikh lived, and had there truthfully recounted what had taken place at my house. He added that he was not going to take the money back again a second time, and he offered it to the Sheikh, who now asked me whether he might receive it. I told him he must decide that himself, but as the giver was his father-in-law, and he (the Sheikh) had lost everything he possessed by reason of the Dato' Bandar's rebellion (as it was called), this might be a legitimate means of getting some of it back again. The Sheikh left me with the impression that he meant to accept the money.

Two or three days later, it was arranged that the Dato' Bandar and Raja Haji should accompany me to Singapore, but, as ill luck would have it, my steam launch, our only means of conveyance, broke down, and I was in despair till I found an ingenious Raja, who took out the broken bit of the engine, made a model in wood, and cast a replica in silver, from dollars I supplied for the purpose. The substitute was too heavy, and we had several stoppages

on the way, but we managed to reach Singapore without further mishap.

On the way down I noticed, in the train of the old Dato', a boy of surpassing ugliness, who attracted my attention by the disproportionately-large size of his head. It was shaven, and covered all over with lines, so that you could not put your finger on it anywhere without touching one. I asked the meaning of this curious phenomenon, and was told he was the Dato's debt-slave, and his master had "knotched" his head with a chopper whenever the boy incurred his displeasure. As the child was not more than ten years old, he must have got in the Dato's way frequently.

The Dato' Bandar and Raja Haji were accommodated with residences, allowances were granted to them, and they were told they must remain in Singapore during the pleasure of the Governor. The old man never left again, and died in Singapore. But Raja Haji joined me in an expedition to another State, where disturbances broke out, and, in return for the services he then rendered, his liberty was restored to him, and he was rewarded by her Majesty's Government.

Sheikh Mat Ali accompanied the party to Singapore, and told me that he had taken with him two hundred of his father-in-law's dollars for expenses, leaving the

other eight hundred in a box in charge of the police, who occupied the stockade at Bandar Těrmâsa.

Two or three days after our arrival in Singapore, the Sheikh informed me that news had come from Langat, by some native channel, to tell him that the eight hundred dollars left behind had been stolen, the culprits being one of my police and a Langat Malay. In due time we returned to Bandar Těrmâsa, and found that this was true. For the moment the policeman got clear away, but was afterwards arrested. The other man was taken, and he made full confession, pointing out a spot in the jungle where he had buried his share of the plunder, and that was recovered.

Again, that looks like finality ; but I cannot refrain from relating the sequel, even though it contains a moral.

Months passed, perhaps even a year or more, and the Dato' Dâgang, finding the tide setting strongly against him, left Langat in disgust, and returned, I suppose, to his own country. The audacious attempt at bribery only remained in my mind as an amusing incident, when there was forwarded to me, under official cover, a letter from the Dato' Bandar to the Colonial Secretary at Singapore, written in English, saying that on a date named he had lent me a thousand dollars, and would be glad if I could be

called upon to repay it! When I had got over the amazing effrontery of this statement and demand, it occurred to me that, quite apart from any question of principle, there may be unexpected risks attaching to the acceptance of bribes, even when offered under what look like safe conditions. I had reported all the circumstances at the time they occurred, and I did not think it necessary to do more than refer to my official journal, wherein the circumstances were minutely described. Afterwards, I was stationed for a time in Singapore, and the old Dato' Bandar used to call on me monthly, and I became accustomed to his complaints that the Colonial Treasurer was robbing him. I also smiled on his invariable custom of helping himself to two cigars when he left my office. I knew he never smoked, but he said he had friends who did, and that was the same thing. Besides, he was about eighty years old, and I knew he must die soon. We were quite friendly before that happened, but he never left Singapore. He sleeps there now, with the faithful who have "gone home to the mercy of God," and when he rises and has settled the long account that stands against him, I feel sure he will make an endeavour to secure some return for the ill-advised investment of his thousand pieces of silver.

## A "GENRE" PICTURE

THE other day, I had to move from the house where I have lived for the last seven years, and, in the consequent upheaval of accumulated rubbish—specially letters, papers, and books—I found a note, or to speak accurately two notes written on one sheet of paper, which brought vividly to my recollection an incident that occurred while I was living with one of the writers, Captain Innes of the corps of Royal Engineers.

Innes and I had taken a house in Penang, and had just moved into it. The house stood at the junction of two roads; it was surrounded by a large but neglected garden, and the place altogether resembled an Eastern Castle Rack-rent, an appearance partly due to the fact that it had not been occupied for some time. The garden was a veritable jungle; but the house was large and roomy, approached by a rather imposing flight of steps, which led into a great marble-paved hall, lighted by long,

narrow windows, glazed with small panes of glass. It was principally on this account that we named our new habitation the Baronial Hall.

I remember that the stables contained but three stalls, to accommodate Innes's one horse and my three ponies. I thought I might claim two of the stalls, but Innes's horsekeeper, a Sinhalese, in whom his master had more confidence than I had, insisted that his horse was of a very superior breed, and must have one stall to stand in and another to sleep in, so I accepted the position, and sent two of my ponies to live elsewhere. I cannot say that I felt all the compassion called for by the circumstances, when, one night, some weeks later, as I was dressing for dinner, I heard a peculiar noise in the direction of the stable, and, looking out, I saw in the bright moonlight the Sinhalese, face-downwards, on the sand of the open space before the stable, while my pony, a not too good-tempered beast at any time, was apparently eating him, and enjoying the process.

When we had rescued the horsekeeper, and sent him to the hospital (where he remained a considerable time, and from which he returned happily drunk), I pointed out to his master, that if the wise old man understood the horse in his care,

he was less well informed about the habits of my pony.

This incident, and the fact that Innes planted what should have been the lawn with guinea-grass, the favourite food of his too-pampered charger, are the only facts of any importance that I can remember, till the coming of the *ŭnka*.

*Ŭnka* is the Malay name for the tailless monkey, called by Europeans a Wah-Wah. I do not know where that name originated, but the creature makes a noise like the soft and plaintive repetition of a sound that can be fairly put into letters, thus—Wu', Wu'. When several *ŭnka* get together in the jungle, in the early morning, they will sit in a high tree, in a circle round one of their number, who pipes and sings, and finally screams, a solo of many variations, through which runs this simple *motif*, and, at a certain point, the others all join in, calling in loud and rapid tones—WU' WU' WU' WU' WU' WU' ; the first two or three cries delivered shrilly and slowly, the others tumbling on each other's heels in a descending scale. And then *da capo*, until the sun gets too hot, or they quarrel, or become too hungry or thirsty to go on ; I cannot say for certain, for though I have watched and listened to the concert for a long time, I had not patience to wait till the end.



The *únka* is either black or fawn-coloured; he has extraordinarily long and strong arms and legs, a face of never-changing sadness, which may on occasion turn to an evil expression of vice and fury, and somewhat formidable teeth. But, in the main, the *únka* is a gentle and docile creature, easily tamed, and his only amusements seem to be to swing himself with great leaps along a bar, to sing the Wu'-Wu' song, or to sit, in deep meditation, with his toes turned in, his head between his knees, and both hands clasped on the nape of his neck.

I was much shocked, one day, when I saw two small *únka* gambolling in a tree in front of the house of a Malay head-man. There was nothing very strange in the fact that these creatures should have been where they were, but, what was unusual to me, was to find that each was wearing a dress of cotton print, one blue and the other pink, with their heads appearing from the neck, their hands from the sleeves, and their legs—well, that was the worst of it, they were hanging by their feet, and I went away. As a rule, as I have already mentioned, they hang by their arms, but then, with the exception of these orphans, I have never seen any *únka* in print gowns. It only shows how unwise it is to try and clothe all nationalities in the garments of Western civilisation.

Again, I remember an *ánka* I used to know very well. He was a dissipated creature, and lived in a box on the top of a pole. There was a hole in a corner of the box, and into this used to be fixed a corked bottle of whisky and water, which gave the *ánka* a good deal of trouble to pull out, but, once fairly in his hands, he made short work of the extraction of the cork and the consumption of the contents.

Then he used to be told to come down, and, when he reached the ground, he would turn a succession of somersaults with a grace and agility that would have made a London street-arab green with envy. But I confess it was the last act of the performance that I most enjoyed ; it was called "the bath." An old kerosine tin, one side of which had been cut away, was filled with water, and the bath was placed on the ground in a suitable spot. As soon as it was ready, the *ánka*, who had watched the preparations with careful interest, walked slowly up to the bath (by the way, they walk on their hind-legs usually, and drink with their mouths, not from their hands), and, standing at one end of the tin, gripped the sides of the bath, at a convenient distance, with both hands. Then slowly—very, very slowly—he went head foremost into the water, turning, as he did so,

a complete somersault, his dripping, woebegone face, appearing gradually from out the water, as he arranged himself to sit comfortably, with his back against the end of the tin, and his arms hanging over the sides, exactly as a human being might sit in a bath. The *unka* would recline thus for about half a minute, looking the picture of extreme suffering, and silent protest against the unfeeling laughter of the spectators. Then he suddenly jumped up, and, springing with both feet on to the edge of the tin, gave a violent backward kick, that sent the water streaming down the hill, and the bath rolling after it.

The *unka* is fond of a kitten, a chicken, or a puppy, and will cling to it, quite forgetful of the fact that the little thing may be hungry, and tired of these enforced embraces. The creature is very easily affected by cold, and that is probably the reason why it loves to hug a kitten, and cries when the warmth is taken away.

According to Perak tradition, the *unka*, and another species of Simian called *siâ mang*, rather blacker and more diabolical looking than the *unka*, but otherwise not easily to be distinguished from the latter, lived originally in mutual enjoyment of the Perak jungles. Individuals of the two species quarrelled about precedence at a Court Ball, or

a State Concert—probably the latter. The quarrel was espoused with great bitterness by all the *únka* and all the *siámang*, till, at last, the other denizens of the forest, worried beyond endurance, by the constant bickerings, murders, and retaliations of these creatures, issued an edict by which all the *únka* were compelled, for all time, to live on the right of the Perak River and the *siámang* on the left—neither being allowed to cross the river.

A friend of mine, who lived on the right bank of the river, and wished to test the truth of this legend, made pets of a very small *siámang* and a rather large *únka*, for whom places were laid and chairs put at every meal. They were not confined in any way and their manners were indifferent, for, though they were served with every course at each meal, they seemed to take an impish delight in pulling the dishes out of the hands of the servants who passed within their reach.

As my friend was writing one day at a large round table, on which a number of official letters were lying awaiting his signature, I saw the *siámang* climb, slowly and without attracting attention, on to the table, where, for a time, he sat without stirring, regarding my friend with earnest and sorrowful eyes. Then, by degrees, he gradually edged

himself towards the inkstand, and, when quite close to it, dipped his hand into the pot and carefully wiped his inky fingers, in a sort of monkey-signature, on each of the beautifully-prepared official despatches. When, at last, my friend discovered what the *sid-mang* had done, and made as though to catch and punish his tormentor, the small imp disappeared over the side of the table, making piteous little cries, and the *únka*, who had been watching the proceedings through the window, came in and hurried his companion on to the roof, where they always retired to concoct some new outrage.

In spite of these signs of original sin, the *únka*, concerning which I have made these casual references, were, on the whole, of amiable dispositions. My own experience was, alas! to be with one of a different type.

A Governor, whose term of office was up, had arranged with a Malay Sultan to send him two *únka*, to take to England, but, at the moment of his departure, as they had not then arrived, he asked me to take charge of them and forward them to London.

I consented, and one morning a Malay appeared with a letter, and told me that the *únka* had been landed from the vessel in which he had brought

them from a northern State, and were at my disposal. I was busy, and told the messenger to take them to the Baronial Hall. As he was leaving, the man said I should find that the smaller of the two had lost his arm at the elbow, an accident which had occurred on the voyage; for the cages had been placed within reach of each other, and the larger monkey, who, as the man remarked, was rather wicked, had induced his small companion to shake hands with him, and then abused his confidence by twisting his arm off at the elbow.

When I got home, in the evening, I found the small *unka* looking very sick, and he died the next day; but his murderer was a very fine specimen of the fawn-coloured *unka*, about two feet high as he sat on the ground, with an expression of countenance that I did not altogether like. However, he was allowed a certain length of cord, and lived in the coach-house, where I often went to see and feed him, and he received my advances, apparently, in good part. One day, however, he escaped, and I had to call in the services of two time-expired Indian convicts, to catch him. The servants declined to have anything to do with him, and said he was very wicked and tried to bite them, even when they gave him food, so I determined to put him back in his cage.

I anticipated no difficulty, but, as he hesitated to go in, though everything had been done to make his cage look attractive, I put my hand on his back and applied a very gentle pressure. In an instant he turned round and bit me badly, in return for which, I gave him a good beating, and determined I would not trouble about him any more. I gave up my visits to him, but, whenever he saw me, at any distance, even if it were through the venetians of a window, he would turn his back on me, seize one leg with both hands, and, looking through his legs, make horrible faces in a way that I thought very rude and ungrateful.

After a fortnight he got away again. I felt it was more than likely that the servants had connived at his escape, and I was inclined to say, with Mr. Briggs, "Thank God, he's gone at last."

I said that the Baronial Hall stood in the angle of two wide and much-frequented roads. The front road bordered a picturesque bay of the sea, but behind the house was a large coco-nut plantation, and here the *únka* took up his quarters and lived for six months or more. Once, when I returned to the house after a week's absence, I found a crowd of half-caste boys throwing stones at the *únka*, who sat at the top of a coco-nut tree and regarded them

with far from friendly eyes. I sent the boys away, but I realised that the owner of the plantation might object to the *ánka*, as he was probably doing, making free with the fruit of this grove.

I saw no more of my charge, and left Penang on a political mission to Perak, where I remained some time.

Landing, on my return, I went to the quarters of a friend, who was the head of the police force, and he told me, amongst other news, that, only an hour before my arrival, some Eurasian boys had brought to him the *ánka*, dead, and tied on a stick, saying that he had attacked them, and bitten one of their number, very badly, in the hand, and they had been compelled, in self-defence, to kill him. The Superintendent of Police said that this was evidently not the whole truth of what had occurred, but the injured boy talked of claiming compensation from me, though, no doubt, the *ánka* had been made the victim of a combined attack. Bearing in mind what I had seen myself, some months before, I thought that was extremely probable, and, having inspected the body—a piteous object tied to a long stick by the ankles, while the arms had been pulled as far as possible above the head and there fastened round the stick by the wrists—I went home, the Superintendent



undertaking to get the *unka* stuffed, in an attitude of deep humility, with his formidable teeth carefully concealed.

Early the next morning, a servant told me that two Eurasians wanted to see me. I told him to ask them in, and a boy and a man made their appearance. The boy's hand was in a sling, but otherwise he seemed well enough.

I said, "What can I do for you?"

The boy replied, "Your monkey has bitten me."

I remarked, "And you have killed the monkey."

There was a brief silence, and I said, "Tell me how it happened."

"I was going home from school," said the boy, "walking along the high-road in front of this house, when the monkey, who was sitting up in a coco-nut tree, caught sight of me and came down and bit me."

"What were you doing?" I asked.

"Nothing."

"How did the monkey get into the road?"

"He climbed through the hedge."

"Were you the only person on the road?"

"Oh no, there were many others."

"Then why did he attack you?"

No answer.

"Is that all you have to say about it?"

“Yes.”

“Then I wish you good morning.”

Here the man broke in with, “What are you going to give the boy?”

To which I replied, “Nothing, in the face of such a story as that; but what have you to do with it?”

“I have come as the boy’s friend,” he said, “and if you don’t pay him compensation, he will sue you for damages.”

“He must do what he thinks best,” I said, “but I would advise him to prepare a more probable story than that he has just told me; monkeys do not come down from the tops of coco-nut trees to bite inoffensive little boys who are walking on the high-road.”

Seeing there was nothing more to be got out of me, my visitors departed, and I, forgetting the unspoken dislike of the *unka* for myself, mourned his loss, and felt satisfied he had been done to death by the boys of the neighbourhood.

At that time, the judge of the Small Cause Court was a magistrate who had had a great deal of Indian experience before coming to Penang, and a few days after my interview with the boy, this official called at my office and said: “I want to have a few minutes’ conversation with you about a matter that concerns you personally.”

I said, "Pray sit down; I suppose the boy who was bitten by the monkey has been to you?"

"He has," said the magistrate, "and he wishes to summon you for damages."

"He is quite at liberty to do so," I said; "but I can't imagine any one placing any credence in the cock-and-bull story about the monkey coming down out of the tree, and attacking him as he passed on the high-road."

"Oh, but I assure you," said the man learned in law, "that is not at all an improbable story. I knew a road in the Province so infested by monkeys, that they used to come out of the jungle and snatch the baskets of fruit out of the hands of people going to market. No woman could pass there alone, and the men used to go in parties for mutual protection."

"Of course if you know that," I said, without betraying the thoughts that were in me, "I have nothing more to say, but I have heard the details of what really occurred from an unbiassed spectator, whom I can produce as a witness, and the boy's story is very far from the truth."

"Then what is the true account?" said the magistrate; "for I shall not issue a summons without good cause shown."

"I am told," I said, "that this boy and another

were playing in the coco-nut plantation behind my house (not their plantation, by the way; they were trespassers), and the monkey was sitting in a high coco-nut tree hard by, watching the boys and thinking about nothing at all. The boys, as boys will, began to quarrel, and from abuse they soon came to blows; now," I said, "when the monkey saw that, he came down the tree."

"Ah! he came down the tree," broke in my friend.

"Yes," I said, "the man who saw it all says he came down the tree, but the boys continued to fight, and took no notice of him. Then the monkey, who was a particularly intelligent beast, and had lived with respectable people, felt he ought to interfere, because he knew it was wrong of boys to fight, and had seen them beaten for doing it. He, poor thing, could not speak to them, but he walked up, waving his hands like this" (here I suited the action to the word), "as though he would say, 'Stop! you must not fight any more!'"

"What!" interrupted the magistrate, "he went like this?" as he repeated my action.

"Yes," I said, "so I am told by the man who saw it all. The monkey went close up to them in his anxiety, and then, either the boys misunder-

stood him, or what seems more likely, they were really bad boys, and disliked the monkey's interference, for one of them—the boy who has been injured—slapped the monkey in the face."

"Slapped him in the face!"

"Yes," I said, "so the man says who told me the story; and then, what could you expect? The monkey, finding his good intentions misinterpreted, and himself made the subject of a cowardly assault, bit his assailant—bit him badly in the hand."

"Ah! he bit him in the hand?"

"Yes, and one must make some excuses for him," I said, "because, after all, one ought not to expect too much from a monkey."

"That," said my friend, as he got up and took his hat, "is an entirely different account to the one I heard, and I wish you good morning."

"Of course, of course," I said, as I shook hands with him, "I thought you would like to know the facts." As I closed the door and resumed my seat, I fell a-musing on the curious ways of the *unka*, and the advantages to be gained by a long experience of monkeys.

For months I heard nothing more about the boy and his complaint, but some one told me that, when he went again to my experienced friend, he had

been driven from the presence with what is called "a flea in his ear."

Without my realising that the change meant anything to me, a new judge of the Small Cause Court arrived from England about this time, and replaced the Indian officer. The new-comer, of course, knew nothing about monkeys, and when, just as I was starting on another expedition to the Malay States, I was served with a summons, claiming damages for the injury done to Master Fernandez by a dangerous beast described as my property, I could only ask Innes to put the case in the hands of counsel, and trust to my advocate's skill and the harmless, even pitiful, appearance of the stuffed *unka*, whose counterfeit presentment I suggested should be produced in Court as a last resort.

My journeyings took me finally to Singapore, where I told this veracious story, and consulted both the Chief-Justice and Attorney-General, who assured me that I had no legal responsibility in the matter; indeed, I did not quite understand how the complainant was going to prove that he had been bitten by my *unka* at all, or that I could be said to own, or keep, a creature that for six months had lived by his wits in a neighbouring plantation. However, it is the unexpected which happens, and

I tried to bear the news with fortitude, when I received from Innes the following letter and its enclosure. I never quite made out what became of the stuffed *unka*, but I suppose he is preserved with the records of the case in the archives of the Penang Court:—

"PENANG, 23rd September 18—.

"MY DEAR SWETTENHAM,—You will gather from the enclosure that the monkey case has gone against us. I'm awfully sorry, and did my best in the matter, I assure you. The judge counselled a compromise, after hearing plaintiff's case and Bond's reply, and I thought it safest to take the hint. Bond, as you see, handsomely declines any fee. I have thanked him on your behalf for his exertions, and settled the bill, the amount whereof we can adjust with other matters. I confess I couldn't follow the judge's train of thought, for the story didn't seem to me to tell well in the witness-box.—  
Yours truly, W. INNES."

"18th September 18—.

"MY DEAR INNES,—As Swettenham's case was compromised at the suggestion of the judge, I don't intend to make any charge against him for the little

I did, so all he will have to pay will be \$22.95, costs and damages.—Yours sincerely,

“I. S. BOND.”

There must have been something peculiarly malignant about this *unka*; the slightest connection with him proved fatal to so many people. The Sultan who gave him is dead, and the Governor who never received him; the Chief-Justice and the Attorney-General who took a friendly interest in him; the magistrate who had such an experience of all his kind; the counsel who defended him; my friend who supported him; and—I had almost forgotten—the man who really saw what happened to him. It is almost like the tale of the House that Jack Built—a glorified Eastern version.



## SOME LAST TOUCHES

IN an earlier volume of Malay Sketches, I described the appearance, and some characteristics, of a Malay Sultan, who, since his death, has been known as "the late Sultan, God-forgive-him." He was afflicted, when about sixty years of age, with a strange sickness, and after one successful bout with his adversary, His Highness succumbed to a second attack.

At the time of the first seizure, I was the Sultan's political adviser, and when the serious nature of the disease was reported to me, I sent for a skilled European surgeon, in the hope that he would be able to diagnose the complaint and relieve the patient. The doctor propounded a theory, as regards the disease, which may or may not have been correct; but though he remained within call for a week or ten days, and frequently saw the patient, his services as a medical attendant were politely declined, and he could claim no credit for the partial

and temporary recovery made by the king. Beyond my desire to relieve the sick man, I was interested in a case which seemed peculiar, and I constantly visited the patient, to see for myself how he was getting on, to offer any small assistance possible, and to prevent the invalid being killed by the practice of the black art. Besides these spontaneous visits of inquiry, I was, on several occasions, hurriedly summoned to "the Palace" to witness the expected death-struggle.

It was certainly curious to note how the characteristics of the man dominated him in what appeared, at the time, to be the last moments of his life; and there was something weirdly, yet pathetically uncanny, in the gruesome pleasantries of the dying king.

A powerful, loud-voiced, impatient tyrant, all unused to any kind of ailment, I found him outwardly unchanged, but lying in the middle of the floor flat on a mattress, with one low pillow supporting his head, his sightless eyes fixed on the ceiling. He was so weak that he could do nothing for himself, and when he spoke at all, which was seldom, he complained, in an almost inaudible voice, of a consuming fever and unquenchable thirst. He would hold out his hand for water, and when the

cup was put in it, poured the contents on his chest, or head, or on the pillow, as though he could not find his mouth.

The most pitiful sight, however, was to see his helpless face and body distorted by the fit, which attacked him every few minutes, so that there was hardly any respite; and often I withdrew to some corner, out of sight of his agony. The monotony of exact repetition was dreadful. He would lie there on his back, with his head turned slightly to the right. Then, very gradually, his head would begin to turn over towards the left, his face and limbs twitching convulsively, till, as the head got over to the left side, there would be a paroxysm of struggles, the knees almost hitting the chin, and the face convulsed out of recognition. Then the fit seemed to wear itself out, the twitching ceased, the limbs relaxed and fell into their usual attitudes, while the lines of the face unbent, and the patient, with a sigh of utter weariness, seemed to fall into an uneasy slumber.

After an interval of seven to ten minutes, exactly the same thing would occur again; and this went on for hours and hours, till one wondered how even that strong frame could bear the ceaseless strain. The only means of giving any relief seemed to be

to hold the patient's head, so that it could not turn to the left; but that led to such a struggle, that the cure seemed more cruel than to let the demon of disease have its way.

It was in the brief intervals between these attacks that the king would, apparently, recover consciousness and speak in his right mind. He knew that, amongst the many notable Malays who had gathered to his bedside, there was a very holy man, and he also knew that, in the weeks of waiting, this man had fallen ill, and now lay in the house a fellow-sufferer with himself. From day to day the king would ask how his guest was faring, and one evening, when the report was worse than usual, His Highness remarked, with a grim smile and no small satisfaction, that, after all, the Raja Haji—the royal Pilgrim—would probably go to the mercy of God before his master.

Amongst those who had early felt it their duty to attend upon their lord was a certain head-man, a frequent companion of the king in his hunting expeditions, and a reliable servant in matters requiring tact and secrecy. Many years of such service had met with little acknowledgment, and less reward, and I will not say that this man's presence, at his chief's bedside, might not have been fairly attributed to a

motive kindred to the instinct which draws vultures to the neighbourhood of the dying beast. At any rate, the head-man's face betrayed a look of something less than grief, something alien to sympathy, when, one night, the king bade him approach, as he had something to say to him.

The head-man respectfully pulled himself across the floor to a place near his master's pillow, where he might hear the commands which came, slowly and spasmodically, in a very weak and tired voice, from the sore-stricken king.

"Come nearer," said the master, "I cannot tell where you are."

"Thy servant is here, my lord," said the head-man, edging himself a little closer.

"Nearer still," said the Sultan; "I cannot see you. Ah! but I am blind; I can see nothing. Can you hear me? I would speak."

"Thy servant is quite close now, my lord," said the head-man. "He can hear anything that falls from his master's lips. Thy servant awaits the order of his lord."

"Ismail," said the king, "you have been a good servant, and I would reward you whilst I may."

Ismail's eyes distinctly glistened at this encourag-

ing testimony to his worth—this promise of tardy reward.

The king continued : “ Ismail, you see this ring ? ” Here the Sultan touched a large and valuable diamond ring which he wore on a finger of his right hand. “ Come nearer, Ismail ; it is this diamond ring that I would—that I would like——.” The chief seemed to be struggling to get the ring off his finger, while Ismail’s eyes betrayed the satisfaction he felt, and his fingers visibly itched to touch, to grasp, to close over the gem, which had in its journey already, though slowly, passed one joint of the finger it had so long adorned.

“ Ismail ! you shall have——.” But at that instant the king’s face twitched, his whole expression changed, he thrust the ring home on his finger, and as his head began to roll slowly to the left, he was seized by a violent spasm which convulsed his limbs and distorted his features. As the wife and attendants sought to allay the patient’s torments, the discomfited Ismail dragged himself painfully away to a place by the wall, and, even in that presence, hands were raised to hide the faces of those who found it difficult to entirely conceal their amusement.

Malays (and possibly all Muhammadans) believe

that when the moment of dissolution arrives, the faithful believer is blessed by a vision of the Arabic letters *lam-aliph*—thus  $\text{ل}$ —the initials, as it were, of the Most High. That is, to them, the “writing on the wall.” One night, when I had been summoned in all haste to witness the passing of the king—then believed to be imminent—I entered upon a scene to which I was no longer a stranger, and made up my mind to a long vigil. The room in which the sick man lay was crowded with people. Every man, woman, and child of royal birth had hurried to the deathbed of their relative and Sultan, while as many of the people of the neighbourhood as could gain admission had squeezed into the room. Besides these, there were in the house, and encamped around it, a heterogeneous collection of priests, magicians, warlocks, native doctors, male and female, and all their following of minstrels and assistants.

The royal patient appeared to be very ill indeed, and I could not but share the apprehension that was written on every face, and expressed in the unusual hush of expectancy which silenced the great crowd of spectators. The tormenting fits, which had so afflicted the king, came at rarer intervals, and he lay utterly exhausted, with closed eyes and difficult

breathing, past the help of leech or sorcerer. Indeed, the whole clan of medicine-men had retired to the outskirts of the crowd, and the priesthood was at last in undisputed possession of the patient.

Towards morning, after a weary night of watching, the king suddenly opened his eyes, and made a convulsive effort to sit up. As the priest at his shoulder endeavoured to support the dying man's head, the king murmured, "I fancy I see it—the *lam-aliph!*"

The priest, greatly excited, imparted this news to the assembled spectators, and called upon them to pray for the passing soul of their master, the priest leading the prayer, and the multitude, with bent heads and upturned palms, saying *amin, amin*, at intervals.

After a few minutes the hushed monotone ceased. There was a pause. Every eye turned on the patient, who lay apparently insensible.

Then a faint smile began to dawn on the king's face, and he murmured, "I am not dead after all; I must have made a mistake about the *lam-aliph.*"

I concluded the patient was safe, for the moment at any rate, and as I stumbled along the river bank in the darkness, I thought I recognised some points of resemblance between Louis XI. and the Malay king.



## A NOCTURNE

ON the eastern shore of the narrow strait which divides the island of Penang from the mainland, there stands a small Malay village. It is like many another in Province Wellesley and Malacca, and a description of it will serve almost equally well for all those that are similarly situated. A beach of sand, the colour of pale burnt sienna, when seen close to, fading to yellow and then to white as the eye of the gazer becomes farther and farther removed, forms a wide ribbon of light between the deep blue of the sea and the dark mass of palms which rise from the edge of high-water mark. The sandy soil goes back inland for a width varying from two to four hundred yards, and the whole of this slightly rising ground—*pěrmatang*, as the Malays call it—is thickly planted with coco-nuts; while the picturesque Malay huts are clustered, not close together, but within easy sight and call of each other, under the shade of the palms. Round each house, planted between

the coco-nuts, are usually a few fruit trees; the dark-leaved mangosteen, the *rambutan*, with its striking red or yellow fruit, the coarse mango called *bachang*, which blossoms into a perfect glory of brilliant magenta, and the *rambei*, whose fruit resembles nothing so much as exaggerated bunches of pale-yellow grapes, without either the sheen or the transparency of the wine-fruit. Often there will be a few *durian*—that tree of magnificent dimensions and most graceful foliage, which from a wonderful flower produces the great golden spike-studded fruit, so worshipped by its votaries, so disliked by those in whom the repulsive smell of the thing induces nothing but loathing.

Not every house, but some at least in every village, will have a little square patch of *sireh* vines, trained to climb the rough posts on which the parasite hangs; and when it has reached the summit, some ten feet or so from the ground, spreads itself over and round the support till the wood is hidden in a thick covering of those heart-shaped leaves which the Malay is, or used to be, so fond of chewing with his gambir, tobacco, and areca-nut. I say "used to be," because the practice is now in many places becoming confined to the old people. The teeth of the betel-chewer become

black, and the "new woman" of Malaya has determined that black teeth do not improve her appearance; while the Malay youth, who smokes either the home-made or the foreign cigarette, has no craving for the astringent flavour of the areca-nut, and looks with less than admiration at the crimson lips and blackened teeth of his old folks.

Beyond the belt of coco-nuts, which fringe the shore for miles and miles, lies an apparently endless field of rice; brown when fallow, greener than the greenest grass when half-grown, or golden yellow when the grain hangs heavy in the ripe ears. Behind this again another *pěrmatang*, with small valleys of rice running into the foot-hills, or island-groves of palm and fruit trees, hiding the cottages of the husbandmen and studding a great sea, of level, waveless colour, whose farther shore fades into the blue of distant mountains, rising range behind range into the heart of the Peninsula.

From September to October or November, the men of these villages clear the ground of a five or six months' growth of weeds with a sort of short scythe called a *tajak*, plough it with buffaloes and a rough wooden plough, and then, with the help of their women and children, plant it, see that it is

carefully irrigated or drained throughout the various stages of growth, guard it against the attacks of rats and birds, and in due time reap and garner the grain. During the months when the land lies fallow, the men of a coast village often take to fishing, and, when the tide is suitable, spend the whole night out at their fishing-stakes, getting the "take" to the nearest market by earliest dawn, and then returning to their homes to eat and sleep.

In the village I have described, Pěrmâtang Jambu by name, there lived some twenty or thirty years ago a Malay called Sâmat. He owned a few coconut trees and a strip of the adjoining rice land, and his house was rather newer and better built than that of his neighbours, for he had married, comparatively recently, a comely damsel, the report of whose beauty had already gone beyond the limits of the village. The *padi* season was over, and Sâmat, like his neighbours, was able to congratulate himself on a more than usually abundant harvest; but the money received from the sale of his *padi* (that is, the unhusked rice), beyond what was likely to be required in his house for the rest of the year, or used for sowing in the coming planting season, had been almost all spent in the purchase of a pair of gold bangles for the pretty young

wife, Esah, and Sâmat had joined some of his friends in putting up a fishing-stake, far out at sea, in comparatively deep water. With the profits of this venture they hoped to be able to add some comforts to the diet of rice, fruit, and vegetables, on which they could rely till the next harvest.

Within ten miles of the village there lived, or wandered, a Malay named Dris, of indifferent reputation and no occupation, but with a certain devil-may-care appearance and jaunty air, united to a ready wit, a lithe young figure, and passably good looks. Dris played at work sometimes, when the spirit moved him, and he could do it in what he thought good company; but otherwise he lived on his popularity with the unsteadier portion of the youth of the neighbourhood, and his insinuating manner with the ladies whose husbands happened, for the moment, to be engaged on business that had taken them from home. The gossips of the Province said an unkind thing about Dris—it was that he had never been seen wearing a pair of trousers—but then gossips always say what is unkind, and often what is not true; and as Dris invariably wore a *sârong* or a *kain pré*, the gossips who knew what was beneath these skirt-like garments knew too much of Dris, or assumed to know what should not

have concerned them. How far Dris was aware of his reputation matters very little ; in any case he appeared to be quite unconcerned, and pursued the uneven tenor of his way, as though the approbation or condemnation of the inquisitive section of his neighbours were matters of no account. He must, however, have been in the way of hearing gossip about others, if not about himself, otherwise he could hardly have known that it was worth while to make an excuse for visiting Pěrmântang Jambu, in the hope of catching a glimpse of Sâmat's wife. Indeed several such visits were necessary, and usually they were made when Sâmat was away, helping to put up the fishing-stake that was to prove a little mine of wealth to him and his friends.

Dris was a confirmed wanderer, and no one took much notice of his occasional visits to this secluded spot, but it is possible that, if he always went with the same object, he may have been noticed by the person he came to see. It is hard to say what impression, if any, he had been able to create, for, before the voice of virtuous suspicion had had time to formulate any definite charge, or concoct any plausible story, something happened which put an end to Dris's wanderings, and clothed him respectably for the last, if not for the first, time.

The fishing season had begun, and every evening, ere sundown, the watchers left the long line of straight shore, and pulling or sailing, north-west or south-west, made for their own stakes, where they tied their boats, and clambering up into the tiny crow's nest, sat or lay the whole night through, tending the red lamp which warned passing vessels of the exact position of the stakes; from time to time raising the great net, and scooping out the fish with a long bamboo ladle, and, in between-whiles, gossiping, singing, smoking, and dozing.

The stakes are driven into the sea-bed on the edge of a bank, where there is a sudden drop into deep water. For deep-sea nets, they are in about thirty-six feet of water, at high tide, with six feet of their length above water. They are round jungle poles, straight and strong, with the bark unstripped; they are fixed in the form of a pair of compasses, opened to include an angle of about forty degrees, the legs of the compasses so laid that the rising tide sweeps full into them. The stakes are bound securely together with rattans, and, at the hinge of the compasses, there is a submarine gate, the latticed doors of which open into a small enclosure, also made of stakes, but carefully encased, from sea-bed to high-

water mark, with a latticed lining through which no fish can escape. This enclosure is further strengthened by widely spaced cross-bars over the top, that tie the whole structure together, and enable the watchers to walk about over the great net, which covers the enclosed space of water, and can be raised or lowered at will by means of rattan ropes and wooden pulleys. The tiny crow's nest, which covers a small portion of the top of the enclosure, is roofed with palm leaves, as a protection against rain and sun, and the red lamp is a very necessary protection, not only for the stakes and watchers, but also for passing vessels. The stakes are very often on the edge of a bank, the deep water on the other side of which forms the channel by which small trading steamers and lesser craft approach and leave the harbour. Though a steamer will crash right through the stakes, breaking some and tearing others out of the ground, there is a serious danger to those on deck if any of the stakes get canted, for in that position they will mow down most things that come in their way. The effect is similar to that which may be expected when a passenger train meets a goods train, with a truck of iron rods which have become displaced so as to project over the six feet between metals and into the adjoining track.



Just as the moonlit Eastern night revels and exults in a superb radiance and a soul-satisfying perfection of intense beauty, that no language can convey to those who have not seen and felt its extraordinary power and fascination, so the darkness of the moonless, starless, night is profound, penetrating, and so nearly tangible as almost to induce one to reach up his hands and attempt to tear the veil asunder, in search of a ray of light. In the forest, or under the cover of any grove of lofty trees, that feeling will not diminish till the light of moon, or stars, or dawn, comes to gladden the wayfarer; out at sea, or on a great open plain, or wide road, the eye will, after a time, distinguish between deeper and paler shades of gloom. These periods of "outer darkness" are most intense in the hours before the rise of the moon in her third and, still more, her fourth quarter, and rather less so after she has set, in the first few nights of a new moon; they are therefore chosen by those whose objects need darkness rather than light for safe accomplishment.

On the fourth day of the moon, just as the silver sickle and her attendant planet were sinking into the expectant sea, and all the island-hills and mainland-shore lay basking in a grey-blue haze, a tiny cockle-shell of a boat, paddled by one man, made its way

slowly up the eastern side of the straits, keeping a fair distance from the shore. The solitary occupant was apparently in no hurry, and he had time to remark and muse upon the strange loveliness of his surroundings. The shadows on the nearer shore were deepening, the flickering lights of the *kampongs* disappearing one by one, and it was evident that the villagers of the Province were getting themselves to bed. A few bonfires, at long intervals, showed where the fallen palm branches and driftwood were smouldering in the coco-nut groves, and, through the stems of the trees, might be descried the tethered buffaloes, standing or lying in the smoke to protect their hides from the vicious attacks of mosquitoes. The other side of the narrow strait was shut in by the island of Penang, and on its northern headland glittered the light of a great *Pharos*, throwing its warning signal miles away to north and west ; a beacon for the majestic ocean queens or the humble little native craft. The island rises in its centre (or rather to the north of it), in a great mass of wooded mountain, 2500 feet in height, and the level plain, which lies at the foot of this hill, runs out into the strait in a flat promontory, covered for the last two miles by closely-packed houses, while on the point stands an ancient fort surrounded by a moat ;

a picturesque feature, but now useless as a means of defence. Close against the shore lie anchored scores of small coasting steamers and native craft, of cargo-boats and lighters, steam launches, Chinese sampans, passenger-boats, and fishing-boats of every conceivable form and rig. Farther out, in deep water and the full rush of the tide, are the ocean-going steamers and large sailing vessels. A luminous sheen hangs close over the town, while isolated lights twinkle on all the hills and down the shoreline to southward, far as the eye can see. The mast-head lamps of the innumerable vessels riding at anchor in the roads glimmer against the haze-wrapped background, and the dark hulls of some of the nearer ships loom unsubstantial and unreal, as though barely resting on the surface of the water.

The solitary paddler in that absurd toy-boat takes all this in at one glance, but it does not sensibly affect him; he has seen it all a thousand times before, been born to it, and lived with it all his life; and to realise, to even the extent of his power of appreciation, the charm of his surroundings, he would have to be deprived of them, and taken, for a while, to some less outwardly-attractive corner of that world of which he knows nothing beyond what he now sees. He is not thinking of the scenery, but of

some plan, for the development of which he seems to depend on the moon, as his attention has, for a long time, been divided between watching the progress of her setting, and gazing with long, thoughtful glances, in the direction of a point on the Province shore.

The moon has set now, and though a few stars give light enough to show the outlines of the island opposite and the thick shadows of palms on the neighbouring coast, the occupant of the boat is evidently not yet satisfied, for while he wastes the time which remains before midnight in paddling very slowly and noiselessly towards the north—getting now quite close to the beach, from which, in the gathering darkness, this frail diminutive speck on the water can no longer be distinguished—he stops when he reaches a solitary stake standing in the shallow water, and making his boat fast to it, sits down, and listens to the lapping of the tide on the all but invisible sand.

. . . . .

It happened that, many hours earlier, Sâmat, whose fishing-stake lay north-west of his village, had gone to share the night's labours with his friends, but, with the coming of sundown, he had been seized with so sudden an attack of fever, that

one of the other men had taken him home, and returned with the boat to the fishing-stake. Sâmat had duly suffered from the attentions of the local wiseacres, who had in turn prescribed for him. Left alone, at last, with his own household, the door had been barred, the primitive lamp extinguished, and the master had fallen into a fitful slumber, from which he awoke, from time to time, to slake a devouring thirst.

As the fever-stricken man lay tossing restlessly on his mat, not asleep yet not awake, he fancied he heard a sound as of some one moving underneath the floor of his room. The house consisted of this one room, raised about five feet above the ground on piles, with a narrow veranda running the length of the room in front, a door leading from room to veranda, and a ladder of round steps from the veranda opposite the door to the sandy ground. In the perfect stillness which enwrapped the village, a stillness broken only by the gentle but monotonous caress of the sea kissing the smooth beach, every sound was audible to a listener whose sensibilities were once fully aroused. Sâmat's faculties were soon alive, in spite of his sickness, and he was now convinced that some being, or some beast, was moving cautiously under the house. At 2 or 3 A.M.

that sort of sound means usually no good, and Sâmat forgot his fever in the sudden excitement of possible danger. Rising quickly and silently, he possessed himself of a Kedah *lading* that was never far from his hand. It was a curious weapon, or tool, one or other as you liked to regard it, but generally supposed to be intended for cutting jungle or *padi* weeds, or doing any clearing work. The handle was of horn, and from it sprang a long rusty blade, very narrow at the butt, but slightly curved backwards, and widening to what would have been the point, if it had not been a squared end instead. The blade had a horribly sharp edge, and enough weight in the back to make it a dangerous weapon in the hands of a man who hit with determination.

Carrying the *lading* in his hand, Sâmat reached the door, which he suddenly threw open, and striding with a single step across the veranda, stood at the top of the ladder. There he paused, for though he could see nothing in the inky night, he *felt* that some one was standing on a lower step of the ladder—some one who, in the act of ascending, had paused in the face of the man he heard and felt was close above him. If either had the advantage as to sight, it was not the man who had but a moment before been tossing, half asleep, on his mat in the throes of fever.

Sâmat said, once only, "Who is that?" but there was no answer, and without more ado or over-long waiting, he struck down straight and clean with the *lading* at where he knew the danger must be. He knew he had hit something, for a voice he seemed to recognise said, "God! God!" and there was a sound as though a man had fallen to the ground. And yet, he thought, he could not have done much harm, for the resistance was so slight, when the weapon sped through the air, that he could not have hit the man on head or body at all.

This thought flashed through his brain as, with a cry of "Thieves! thieves! help! my friends," he leapt to the ground, prepared to strike another blow at the would-be burglar.

A quiet voice, which he now recognised, said, "Don't any more, Sâmat, you have cut off my hand." At the same time Esah was heard, at the door above them, calling, "What is the matter, Sâmat? Who is there?" and one by one the doors of the nearest houses opened, and the owners appeared with lights and weapons, each in turn crying, "What is that? Where is the thief? We come, we come!" In that moment Sâmat was terribly perplexed. What had he done? and what was Dris (for he was the thief) doing on the steps of his house at that time of night?

Perhaps Dris, in spite of his lost hand, had had time to think of this, for when Sâmat said, "What are you doing here, Dris?" the latter replied, "I was out fishing with a line, but, as I had no luck, I landed near here and was trying to make my way through the *kampong* to the road. In the darkness I blundered against your house, and you have cut off my hand, for which God in His mercy requite you;" and he broke off into a torrent of wails for his own misfortune, and complaints against Sâmat for the injury done.

By this time the two men at the foot of the ladder were surrounded by neighbours bearing lights, old men and young, and on the outskirts and in the doorways a few women, as the throng gradually increased. As soon as Sâmat could see Dris, he caught hold of the bleeding stump of the latter's right arm, from which the hand had been cleanly severed, and was trying his utmost to quench the terrible flow of blood that was rapidly making the victim so weak that he needed support.

Then some one said, "Where is his hand? Where did it fall?" And all those not otherwise engaged began a search for the severed member. The indifferent light of a torch, a blazing fagot, and two or three burning wicks swimming in coco-nut oil,



soon led to the discovery of the bloody hand lying by the steps. Some dark spots on the sand, and brighter stains on the ladder, fairly indicated Dris's position when he received the blow.

The hand was picked up, and showed that it had been severed at the wrist, now covered with blood and sand. A voice said, "Wipe it well;" and the thing was duly wiped with a strip of rag torn off an old *sârong*. The next and most natural operation, in the minds of the bystanders, was to carry the hand back to its owner and replace it, as nearly as possible, in the position it originally occupied. The skin looked rather pallid and the fingers somewhat limp, but to refix the hand on the bleeding stump seemed the simplest bit of surgery imaginable. At any rate, when tied securely on, it would help to stanch the bleeding, which was now but partially held in check by a tight ligature of rag above the wound, and the pressure of several fingers and thumbs on the injured man's arm, in places where the most officious thought there were likely to be arteries.

Dris presented a very sorry spectacle as he submitted to the well-meant attentions of the crowd. From the stump of his right arm had spouted a jet of blood that made a broad red stain down his

*sârong*; the sleeve of his jacket was also deeply dyed with the same colour, and his other hand and sleeve showed unmistakable signs of his attempts to stanch the crimson stream, which still fell, intermittently, in thick, sticky splashes from the wound.

Sâmat, who was beginning to feel very uncomfortable as regards his share in the incident, looked at Dris and said, "Why did you not speak?" But Dris appeared not to hear, and only opened and closed his eyelids as though he were losing consciousness. Some rough splints were produced from somewhere, and a quantity of rags torn into bandages, also some Chinese tobacco (the nearest approach to a strong cobweb, and a famous thing for stanching blood), and chewed leaves. Without slackening the pressure on the arm, the hand was now carefully fitted on to the stump, the ends of skin drawn together, the splints adjusted, the tobacco and leaves plastered thickly round the wound, and the whole swathed tightly in the far from clean bandages.

While this was going on, one of the surgeons said, "Did you not see he was going to strike you? However dark it was you would realise that, for he was between you and the sky; why did you not speak then?" Dris evidently heard this, for he

said in a weak voice, "There was no time; I could not see what he had in his hand, but I raised my arm to guard my head, and this is what he did to me."

Doubtless the bystanders had ideas on the subject, but they did not express them. There was evidently nothing to be gained by questioning Dris, and after all it was not their business; but some of them glanced at Esah, who still stood in the door of her cottage, where she had been joined by several of her women neighbours, and it was they who had supplied what was asked for in the way of surgical appliances.

The village head-man was now on the scene, and he decided that Dris must be taken to the nearest hospital, and Sâmat to the police station, where a report of the circumstances would be made. The nearest hospital was ten miles distant, and there also was the principal police station; so a pair of bullocks were put into a covered cart, a mattress, mats and pillows were arranged within it, and Dris was supported to the vehicle and lifted in; great care being taken to carry his wounded arm independently, and make a steady and easy rest for it, when once he was in the cart. Two women sat beside the injured man, to make his journey as comfortable as possible, to moisten his lips and fan

away the mosquitoes ; while the head-man, Sâmat, and some others, whose testimony as witnesses might be useful, followed on foot.

As the little *cortège* disappeared in the darkness, which as yet showed but small signs of approaching dawn, it was an old man who said, "Strange indeed are the ways of that Dris, but people say that he never wears trousers."

Ten minutes later, all was still in the village, and, beyond the blood-stains on Sâmat's stairs, there was nothing to show that anything particular had happened. Inside the house, Esah sat thinking, and wondering, and planning, till the grey light, the cold breeze from the sea, the crowing of the cocks and the noise of opening doors, roused her from her reverie. As she went down to bathe at the well, the one fixed idea in her mind was, that if Sâmat did not return by the third hour of prayer she must go and see what had happened to him, and then, she might also hear something about Dris, and how he was faring in the white man's sick-house.

. . . . .

It was nearly 6 A.M. when the cart arrived at the hospital, and the resident apothecary having glanced at his new patient, and been informed of the nature of the injury, had Dris carried into the building and

deposited on one of the trestle-beds in the clean, cool ward. The head-man's principal anxiety being relieved, by safely transferring the wounded man to the care of the "Tân Doctor," as he politely styled the apothecary, he ordered the cartman to take out his bullocks and let them graze on the roadside, while he went, with Sâmat and the other men, to make a report at the police station.

The case, as reported, seemed a serious one, and it was hard to say, as yet, what it might develop into. The Assistant-Superintendent, the head of the Province police, was immediately informed, and having questioned the head-man, told Sâmat he must be detained for a while, until a reliable authority could be consulted as to the real extent of the wounded man's injuries. The Assistant-Superintendent then visited the hospital, looked at the sick man, who seemed to be exhausted by loss of blood and the trying journey in the cart—but, as to his hand having been cut off—well, the policeman was not a surgeon, but he supposed that was a bit of native exaggeration. The state of the patient's clothes showed, however, that there must be a very serious wound, and the Assistant-Superintendent decided to send at once to Penang for the surgeon, as the case was probably beyond the skill of the

apothecary; an opinion with which the latter at once concurred, glad enough to be spared the responsibility of having to deal with a case that would probably take him before the Supreme Court, to be catechised as to the treatment employed.

It was 9 A.M. when the surgeon arrived at the hospital and visited the wounded man, who had been carefully tended in every way, except that no attempt had been made to interfere with the Malay surgery. Dris was now in clean hospital clothes, his arm properly supported, and himself made otherwise as comfortable as possible. He had eaten food, and his temperature was being watched to guard against any access of the fever which had already declared itself. The Malay women who accompanied him to the hospital had visited him, and, their services being no longer required, they had gone to look for a breakfast.

The surgeon listened while the apothecary reported the facts of the case, as they had been told to him, and smiled as he heard the story of the severed hand: lost in the darkness, the search with lights, the finding of the hand covered with blood and sand, its cleansing, and finally the operation of replacing it on the wrist from which it had been cut.

The surgeon smiled, for, as he sat there, he held in

his own this so-called "severed hand," and though it was not particularly clean, and the bandages were very dirty, and partly saturated with blood, streaks of which lay dry and cracking on both hand and arm, yet, if he knew anything at all, he could both see and feel that the hand was *alive*. Of course, if the hand had really been cut clean off, it could not have been stuck on again, least of all by a parcel of stupid native villagers. Therefore it was clear that the story had been exaggerated, and though, no doubt, the wrist had been very nearly severed, quite near enough for a Malay to say, "cut in two," of course a complete severance of hand and arm had never taken place; otherwise, how was it that the hand *looked* all right now? How was it that it *felt* warm, felt as though the blood was coursing through it? The fingers did not move—of course that was hardly to be expected; the sinews were probably all cut, and the man had received a desperate gash that might destroy the full use of his hand for all time. But the idea of the member having been cut off, dropped in the sand, hunted for with lights!!

The surgeon laughed quietly, and looked at Dris as he lay there. The man was evidently much exhausted—he must have lost a lot of blood—and that journey in the cart, that was bad, and no doubt

accounted for the high fever which was now declaring itself, but still :—

“ Did you say your hand was cut off ? ”

“ Yes, Tûan.”

“ Truly ? ”

“ Truly, Tûan.”

“ But it is not possible ; your hand is right now ? ”

“ Yes, Tûan.”

“ How long was it off ? ”

“ I don't know, Tûan.”

“ No, I don't think you do,” remarked the surgeon in English, as the patient closed his eyes, the effort of talking seeming too much for him.

“ Well,” said the surgeon, turning to the apothecary, “ we must get off those horrible dirty bandages. I'm rather surprised you did not remove them when the patient came in.”

“ The Assistant-Superintendent of Police thought I had better do nothing till you came, sir,” said the apothecary, “ as the case seemed serious, and from the information he has, he can't understand what it means, and what this man was doing when the other struck him.”

“ Oh, very well,” said the surgeon ; “ get a basin of water, bandages, lotion, and everything, and I'll dress the wound.”



All the requisites were at once brought, and the surgeon began, slowly and carefully, to unfold the filthy blood-stained rags that had served as bandages. As he came to the chewed leaves and Chinese tobacco, now coagulated into a black-brown mass, the touch of which dyed his fingers scarlet, he muttered, "What horrible mess is this, enough in itself to produce mortification?" Then the splints; the poor, rough, ill-cut splints, once a dirty yellowish white, but now a sort of red mahogany; these he carefully removed, one by one, after detaching the narrow strip of rag which bound them.

The wounded man's arm and hand were being supported while this operation went on, but as the underlying splints were removed, the hand came quietly but completely away from the arm, to the great horror and astonishment of the surgeon.

A rush of blood, but not a very strong one, came from the stump of the arm, and some fell also from the hand.

One cannot wait to think or theorise in a crisis like this, but, deeply impressed by what he had seen, the operator again adjusted the hand to the arm and bandaged the two together with all the skill he possessed; determined to watch by his patient until he obtained some certain result.

That certainty was gained without much waiting, and it was only too evident, from the entirely different appearance now taken by the member, that Dris's hand had been not only completely severed from the arm, but that it was now dead beyond all hope of recovery. The second grafting was a failure.

The hand was, of course, removed, and the stump treated in accordance with the rules of scientific surgery; but the arm mortified, and the patient died under the shock of amputation at the shoulder. This unfortunate result may fairly be ascribed to the ten miles' cart journey; but that is not the view they used to hold in Sâmat's village, when he returned there, after a nominal term of imprisonment for causing the death of the Malay *sans-culotte*.

## A STUDY IN SHADOWS

HE was not a very nice man, as Malay chiefs go; he was certainly not popular in Malay society, and if I were to faithfully describe his character, as it appeared to me and others who knew him, it would look very ill indeed. Then he did not affect to be other than he was; and he bluntly expressed his opinions of men, women, and motives, in language that was no doubt sincere, but distinctly unwise. He had a reputation, but not a good one; and I don't think he was in any way troubled by the fact. A Muhammadan by profession and association, he observed no rule that ran counter to his inclinations, and probably did not understand the meaning of our word conscience. Still, he had scruples, but with very pronounced limitations; they would have prevented him from robbing his neighbour of money, but not from seducing his wife; they would have made him scorn to hit a man in

the dark, but encouraged him to assault and battery in the daylight.

I dare say you will think the chief was a very bad man, and if I were to tell you all I knew about him, you would be sure of it. But he had some good points, and it is difficult to judge any Eastern, especially one so far removed from outside teachings and influences as a Malay, by Western standards.

This man was a gambler, and not over-generous; he was exceedingly jealous of his women-folk, and selfishly declined to give them the liberty enjoyed by the rest of their class. He was not even so hospitable as others with smaller means; for besides being a man of rank and position, he was decidedly well off.

On the other hand, he was courageous, intelligent, a sportsman, energetic, trustworthy in all the affairs of men, a good friend, of even temper and quick wit, with the sense of humour common to almost all Malays of his class. The spirit of the clan was strong in him, but he was very independent in thought and speech, with a determination that somewhat inclined to stubbornness.

At the time I speak of the chief was about thirty-five years of age, short and thickset, plain in feature but powerful in build, and the world had treated

him well. If he had not grown in favour with God and man, he had prospered considerably; so that he owned many acres and houses and wives (more, so gossip said, than his Prophet allowed), elephants and horses and carriages, men and maid servants, and everything that the heart of Malay could desire. He had had a few troubles, but only one of serious consequence, and that was when he had beaten a more favoured rival for the favours of a lady who declined the chief's attentions.

For this assault the ruler of the country (who was not altogether sorry to get this opportunity of bringing the chief to book) summoned his vassal into the presence, to hear his sentence. The delinquent duly attended, and with an attitude and bearing required by the circumstances, listened to the statement of his misdeeds, in the presence of a very large company of fellow-chiefs and less important people. When the Raja ended his harangue, by informing his erring subject that he would have to pay a fine of two thousand dollars (the extreme penalty sanctioned by ancient usage), the chief bowed his acknowledgments in silence, and as he withdrew from the embarrassing position of solitary penance in the middle of the hall of audience, to a place at the side amongst his peers, it is said

that he whispered, "I was afraid His Highness would fine me fifty cents."

That indiscretion was already a matter of history, when chiefs and people assembled, from far and near, to join the ruler in a series of festivities in honour of His Highness's birthday. Everything had gone well; the function had delighted prince and peasant, and the last day of the revels had repeated and accentuated the success of its predecessors. At the evening feasts, hosts and guests were congratulating themselves on the brilliance and harmony of the proceedings, when a rumour spread, from bazaar to palace, that the trusted accountant of the chief had been assaulted on a lonely road, and was lying, grievously wounded, in a house on the outskirts of the village.

On occasions of large public gatherings such as this, Malays live in the hours of night. The evening meal is eaten after dark, the weather is usually fine, the plays and other attractions are given in the open air, and the junketings continue till nearly dawn. Amongst the higher classes, every one knows every one else, and relationships are recognised, even to what seems remote kinship. The clan feeling is universal, and an insult or injury to a relative, friend, or follower of a powerful

chief is strongly resented, and may, in a moment, lead to very serious consequences. Every Malay chief of importance has a considerable following, both in his house and outside it. There is his family—often several families—his servants and hangers-on, his relatives, some of whom are sure to live with him, and in return for food and clothing and other benefits, perform services of various kinds, ranging from the care of his estates, investments, money, or valuables, to the veiled surveillance of his wives and the running of messages. When a chief travels, especially when he attends a great function, it is his pride to take with him a large following, as the visible proof of his wealth, power, and importance.

The chief of whom I write had two principal assistants ; one was his nephew, named Wan Hamid, a youth who held a State office of responsibility on his own account, and managed his uncle's property as well. The other was an older man, a very distant connection, who kept his master's keys and books, carried on his correspondence, and performed those confidential services which render such a man invaluable to his employer. This last was Sleman, and he it was who had been suddenly attacked and beaten on the high-road, while the ruler of the

country, his chiefs and other guests, were feasting and taking their pleasure, after the manner of their forefathers, amid the perfume-laden gardens of the picturesque riverine, a mile away.

A misfortune of this kind arouses instant sympathy, and when it occurs on such an occasion, the ruler's household, his officers and attendants, as well as every guest, regard it as a personal affront to their lord. On this occasion the feeling was unusually strong, and the Raja himself went at daylight to make inquiries. But I am anticipating, and will record the facts as they occurred.

The chief had been bidden, with others, to a feast in the palace, and as he was then living in a large but rather lonely house, on the opposite side of the village, he sent his caretaker to find a woman to companion his wife during his absence. The chief's house was on a rising ground, with terraces leading down to a piece of artificial water, and the caretaker lived in a small hut across the pond. An ancient female, called Maimunah, was bidden to keep the wife company; but the latter said that a woman was company but not protection, and a man must stay with them. The chief told Sleman to stay behind, and whilst he and the old woman were waiting in the caretaker's house, a message



was brought to the effect that the chief had such a bad headache he could not attend the feast. There was, therefore, no further need for the old woman, and she said she would return home. The caretaker was preparing to accompany her, when Sleman said he need not disturb himself, as he would see Maimunah home, and the pair accordingly started to walk a few hundred yards, carrying a lamp, as it was very dark. The caretaker's house was on the side of the high-road, and Maimunah and Sleman started on their journey as soon as the latter had completed his toilette. To the others in the house his preparations seemed needlessly elaborate, if the only object was to escort an old woman through the darkness for something less than a quarter of a mile. The couple left the house, Maimunah carrying the lamp and Sleman walking behind. They had gone about a hundred yards, when the old woman heard what she described as the sound of "a breaking stick," and turning round saw Sleman, on all fours in the road, with the blood streaming from a deep cut over his ear. He was conscious, and as she helped him up, said, "Some one has struck me ; it is my fate, I could not see who did it." The woman screamed for help, and that brought out the caretaker and another man, with whose assist-

ance Sleman managed to walk back to the house. There he lay down, telling the occupants to bar the door, and say nothing. He had been waylaid; it was fate; but probably he had his own ideas as to whom he owed his misfortune. He was plucky, however, and thought the best thing for every one was to say as little as possible about it.

The gash in Sleman's head bled horribly, in spite of the well-meaning but clumsy surgery of Maimunah and the caretaker's wife, and in an hour or two he began to vomit blood. Then he realised the serious nature of the wound, and asked those about him to send for the chief. His master soon appeared, and was deeply distressed. He asked Sleman who had done it, and the sufferer answered, "It is my bad luck, but my chief can guess." He seemed disinclined to say more, and if he had his suspicions, or if he knew who his assailants were, he also knew that to disclose their names could only distress his master, and therefore he refused to speak.

In a few minutes the wounded man began to wander, and was no longer conscious of his surroundings. Though medical aid was quickly procured, nothing could be done, and Sleman died before the sun had fairly cleared the crests of the

forest-clad hills which bound the eastern side of the river-vale.

Sleman's death was a cruel blow to his master, whose determination to discover the murderers and revenge his trusted servant was too deep for full expression. His attitude and influence, joined to that of the ruler, who was equally bent on tracking the perpetrators of this ill-timed crime, were sufficient to raise the country-side and set every headman on the trail.

Malay murders, when not the result of *amok* or robbery, are attributable, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, to some trouble in connection with a woman, and on the day of Sleman's death there was only one opinion as to the cause. *Dove la donna* would naturally be the first thought in every mind, but here there was no need to seek the woman, for every one who knew anything was aware that the dead man had carried on a *liaison* with a married woman, and it was her mother who carried the lantern, by the light of which the murderer had seen his victim so clearly that one blow had settled the business. Suspicion, therefore, fell upon the outraged husband, and he was incontinently arrested.

Charged with the crime, this man was able to prove his innocence, and as the lady was reputed to have

another lover, or at least another friend anxious to occupy that position, the voice of gossip named him as a likely cause of Sleman's undoing. The second accused, however, cleared himself as easily as the first, and then the knowing ones were at fault.

Meantime the influence and directions of ruler and chiefs began to bear fruit, and, little by little, the truth leaked out.

The caretaker of the chief's house managed to remember that on the evening of the murder, when he had fetched Maimunah to keep the chief's wife company, and when they were just going to enter his house, a man had called to him from the road, and returning to see who it was, he found Wan Hamid. Wan Hamid had asked him if Sleman was then in his house, whether the chief was going to the feast, whether Sleman would accompany him, and had further inquired whether Sleman was wearing any kind of weapon. Assured on all these points, Wan Hamid had gone away, but not before the caretaker had recognised two men who were with him. Supposing that Wan Hamid was concerned in the affair, the question to determine was whether he had any grudge against Sleman, his fellow-worker and assistant in the management of the chief's property and money matters. The answer was that Wan

Hamid had undoubted cause to dislike Sleman, and the reason was this. About a couple of months earlier, Wan Hamid had discovered that certain rents, supposed to have been collected by Sleman from a Chinese tenant of the chief, did not appear in Sleman's accounts, and the Chinese, being called upon for the money due, declared that he had already paid it, and took proceedings against Sleman.

When the chief heard of this he was very angry, and told Wan Hamid to mind his own business, and not to trouble about the loss of his (the chief's) money. The proceedings were therefore stayed, and Sleman, enraged but triumphant, went to Wan Hamid's house and accused him of instigating the Chinese to take action. After an altercation with the young fellow, Sleman left him, and in the presence of a number of people used very insulting language in regard to his master's nephew. On the following day Sleman's wife called on Wan Hamid and begged him to forgive her husband for what he had said; but Hamid declined, with the remark, "What Sleman has said and done to me would, in the old days, have divided a man from his wife, a son from his father."

Once the ball was set rolling, it was surprising what a quantity of circumstantial evidence was forth-

coming, and in a very short time Wan Hamid and two other men—his uncle and a servant—were arrested, and charged with the murder of Sleman.

To a European, the ways of Malays are exceedingly peculiar—that is, until you have shared their inner life, and so learnt their code of honour, their religious teaching, and the doctrines and customs of the men of old time. Though great changes have been effected in the last twenty years, ancient tradition is still one of the strongest rules of the true Malay life of the Peninsula. Amongst the principles inculcated for generations, there are two which still have wonderful force. They are these: the obedience which is due to the governing classes, and the sacredness of confidence. The power of the latter injunction is specially noticeable, when a non-Muhammadan seeks information likely to damage a follower of the Prophet. Owing, in a great measure, to the kind of dwellings in which Malays live, and the circumstances of Malay society, there is practically no real privacy, and there are very few real secrets; but while every one acts and speaks in the presence of witnesses, the traditions of centuries forbid the disclosure of a deed or a word that would compromise a relative or a feudal chief. When this

is once clearly understood, it explains a good deal in Malay life that otherwise seems incomprehensible.

I do not wish to burden this tale with minute details, nor yet to explain how all the information was obtained. My purpose will be best served by sparing the reader the methods and experiences of the detectives, and by piecing together the chain of evidence that, by one means and another, led to the arrest of the accused, and was told from the witness-box at their subsequent trial, before an English judge and a mixed jury.

Wan Hamid, the nephew of the chief, had followed his master from their usual abode, in another district, to the scene of these festivities, and when on his journey he reached the bank of the river, five miles above the ruler's palace, he hired a boat, and dropped down the stream to the immediate vicinity of the *Astâna*, as the Sultan's residence is called. On the way down river, Wan Hamid bid the owner of the boat stop at a spot where many smooth, water-worn stones were lying on the edge of the stream. There he selected six of these uninteresting specimens, and when the boatman asked what they were for, Wan Hamid said, "To play with."

The next day the boatman was ordered to take

the boat back, a mile up-stream, and fasten it at the head of a small island, almost exactly opposite the house of the lady who was known to be greatly admired by Sleman. That house was about 250 yards from the cottage of the chief's caretaker.

At sundown, on the evening before Sleman was attacked, a man called Dris, the uncle of Wan Hamid, was walking towards the village where all this happened, when he overtook an acquaintance, and said, "Do you know Sleman?" But the man said, "No."

"Wan Hamid wishes to have him beaten; will you help me to do it?"

The man said, "I can't; I have a bad foot."

"Ah well, never mind," said Dris, "we will go and see the theatre." They visited the theatre, but they also looked about for both Wan Hamid and Sleman, and saw neither of them. About midnight they returned, and on parting, Dris said, "Come again to-morrow night, and we will look for Sleman and beat him." But the man replied, "I will not join you," and the next day went out of harm's way.

On the following afternoon Dris, disappointed in his first essay, was standing in the road in front of his house, two or three miles above the village,



when two men passed. Dris knew them well, and stopped them, saying, "Wan Hamid has a grudge against a man called Sleman, and wants to have him beaten. If you two will help me, Wan Hamid will pay you thirty dollars." But the men declined, and Dris remarked, "Very well, I will do it myself."

About 7 P.M. that evening, Dris and his brother Daud called at a house where great preparations were being made for a wedding-feast, and while enjoying the dinner which Malay hospitality immediately offered them, it was noticed that Dris never let out of his left hand a heavy-knotted stick he carried. The meal over, the brothers walked down the road, and turned in towards the bank of the stream where Wan Hamid's boat was moored. He was on board, and Dris held a whispered conversation with him. Then Wan Hamid said to Daud, "Sleman has made me angry, and put me to shame. He cheated me of some money, and when I took him into Court the chief stopped the case, so now I am going to beat Sleman." Turning to Dris, Hamid said, "Shall I take the stones?"

Dris replied, "What is the use? this is enough," and he showed the stick he held. Wan Hamid, however, selected two stones, putting the other four

back under the deck-boards, and the three men left the boat and went up the bank, where they were joined by Wan Hamid's servant. When they reached the high-road, Daud said he was going on to the village, so the servant borrowed his stick, and Daud went away to smoke a pipe of opium.

It was now quite dark, and the three men were in the road by the caretaker's house at the moment when he returned with the old woman, Maimunah. Wan Hamid called the caretaker, and having ascertained all he wished to know about Sleman, he said, "If any one asks you what I wanted, say I only inquired whether the chief was going to the Sultan's feast to-night."

Half-an-hour later the old woman carrying the lantern was startled by what she described as "the noise of a breaking stick." It was really the smashing of a skull.

The deed done, Wan Hamid immediately went to the palace, and there he was seen by the messenger who carried the news of the attack and the request for medical aid. Before that, however, Dris had wandered towards the village, met his brother, told him the beating had been duly administered, and the two worthies wended their way homeward.

Thieving and murdering, like church-going, seems

to be hungry work, and when about midnight the brothers reached the house where they had dined, they looked in for supper, and were duly served, for the women were still cooking. Whilst eating their meal (and Dris is said to have been somewhat excited over it), a man lying in an adjoining room, awakened by the noise of these late arrivals, called from his bed, "Well, have you done it?" and Dris replied, "Yes, we gave him one, and it sounded like the cracking of a coco-nut."

The voice called again, "Did you do it?" and Dris answered, "Yes, I did it; Daud only looked on."

One of the women then inquired, "Whom have you beaten?" But Dris said, "Never mind, one of the villagers." She asked again, "Where did you beat him?" He answered, "Near the chief's house." Shortly after, Dris and his brother took their departure, making a deal of noise over it.

In the morning every one knew that Sleman was dead. Those who also knew the culprits said to each other, "Mind you say nothing, or you will get into trouble; Wan Hamid is a powerful man, and the chief's nephew."

Moreover, with the advent of daylight, the caretaker found two smooth, water-worn stones lying at

the very spot where Sleman had been struck, and five days later, Dris returned with sixty dollars, the price of blood, and asked his late entertainers to keep it for his wife!

By-and-by the country-side learned that the chief and his royal master had set every one to work to discover the murderers, and in time it was understood that the dead man was a greater favourite with the chief than his own nephew who had killed him.

When the wrong people had been arrested and released, and the real perpetrators of the outrage had been secured, there was great astonishment, and much wailing and sympathy on the part of Wan Hamid's family. But the die was cast; the chief had raised a cry for vengeance, and he seemed likely to get it, in over-full measure.

I ought to have been present at the festivities in honour of the 'Sultan's birthday, but circumstances prevented my attendance, and I only reached the State after the events above narrated. I had, however, heard the tale in outline, when I was told that the mother of Wan Hamid, and the three leading ladies of Malay society in the district where the chief lived, were anxious to see me. I met them one afternoon, and in reply to their inquiries, told

them that, pending the hearing of the case, nothing could be done. Like all Malay women under similar circumstances, they had no thought for any one except their relative, Wan Hamid, and their one idea was how to compass his release.

After some conversation, and listening to their exceeding bitter cry on his behalf, it occurred to me that I had heard of certain affectionate relations between one of them and the dead man. So, addressing her, I said, "Your anxiety is very natural, but what about the feelings of Sleman's people? Are they to be ignored?" The lady at once replied, "They have said nothing; why need you trouble about them?" It seemed to me that here, as elsewhere, the living quickly learn to bury their dead and to forget them. There could be no object in pursuing that subject, so I said, "The case has yet to be tried; it will be time enough to discuss eventualities when the guilt of the accused has been established." They acquiesced, but said they wanted to see Wan Hamid, who was in the prison awaiting trial. I told them they could not all see him (there were at least a dozen of them, including their attendants); and the lady who, I thought, might possibly feel some regret for the murdered man, at once said, "It is no use my going; the

mere sight of Hamid would bring the tears into my eyes, and I should only make a fool of myself." That was evident, for the mere thought of his evil plight brought tears to her eyes, while the other women wept in sympathy. I suggested that if their anxiety was for the prisoner's feelings, the visit they contemplated was not likely to help him, and they eventually agreed that if his mother and his wife might see him, the others had better stay away.

A few days later the preliminary inquiry was held, and I made it my business to find the chief and express my sympathy. He was extremely grateful, and I was struck by his fine old-fashioned Malay manner of treating his misfortune. After thanking me, he said, "It is my fate that this should have happened, but what distresses me most is that my nephew, after all the Sultan and the Government have done for him, should think only of himself and the gratification of his own wishes. You gave him a position, and he forgets what is due to it. The Sultan invited us all to rejoice with him on his birthday, and that was the moment which Hamid chose to disgrace himself and me. It is the shame of it all which overwhelms me."

I said, "Yes, but you have lost your favourite

servant, and however this case turns out, you must suffer still further. The offence hurts you personally more than any one, and the punishment will also fall directly and indirectly on you."

The chief replied, "That is nothing; I do not count the cost or consider it; I can only think of Hamid's disregard of every principle and every custom which should have saved him and me from this disgrace."

I could not help contrasting, in my own mind, the attitude of the chief with the tearful pleadings of the ladies, who were the relatives of himself as well as of his nephew. I even gave way to the temptation of telling him of their visit to me and our conversation, and when I repeated the reply to my inquiry about the feelings of the murdered man's friends, the chief remarked, "His people are poor and ignorant, but they have been to me. They cannot afford to run about the country with their troubles; why should they? They expect to get justice."

Amongst the benefits conferred on the Malay by British protection is the trial by jury; more recently has been added the privilege of representation by counsel. Wan Hamid, his uncle—a renowned beater of men—and the servant, were

arraigned before a judge and jury, on the charge of having deliberately planned and carried out the murder of Sleman, in order to relieve Wan Hamid's mind of the feeling of shame and insult put upon him by the dead man.

Not a single link was missing in the chain of evidence. All the witnesses for the prosecution were reluctant to incriminate the chief's nephew. Some of them were the near relatives and connections of the second prisoner Dris, therefore their testimony was all the more damning. The issue of the case was a foregone conclusion, and Malay society was only concerned with the probable sentence. Of the nature of the verdict no one had any reasonable doubt.

The combined efforts of five European pleaders and a jury of seven, only one of whom was a white man, secured the unexpected. All the prisoners were acquitted.

I have heard it said that the majority of the jurors declined the responsibility of a verdict of guilty, lest that should lead to hanging ; for they believed that the ghosts of the hanged would haunt those who condemned them.

I happened to travel in the same train with the chief as he returned to his home after the trial. I



cannot say that he showed any great enthusiasm over the success of his efforts to secure an acquittal. It had been a costly business for him, as he had to pay for the whole array of talent that had so successfully defended the accused. And then, he had been fond of Sleman, and the blow which had killed the servant could not fail to strike the master, who was the indirect cause of Wan Hamid's bitter feelings. The chief said to me, "I will send Hamid to Mecca. When he has been there two or three years, and people have forgotten, he can return."

The pilgrimage to Mecca is the cure for the errors of the Muhammadan world. The lady whose *liaison* has become public property; the man who has seduced his sister-in-law, or, like Wan Hamid, been too heavy-handed in beating his enemy; these perform the pilgrimage, and return with repaired reputations and an odour of sanctity that enables them to resume their places in society without loss of caste.

As my friend the chief left the train at his own station, and bowed me his *adieux*, it seemed to me that the fates had been singularly unkind to him. I did not ask him for his views on the jury system, but the result of the trial reminded me of a Malay

proverb, which seemed to fit the situation very nicely. It says:—

*Mâlang Pa' si Kado'*  
*Ayam-nya mênang*  
*Kampong-nya těr-gâdei.*

“The misfortune of Father si Kado’; who had to mortgage his house and lands, though his gamecock won the main.”

## WOODCUTS

**M**ALAYAN woods are the haunt of many strange beasts, of many wonderful birds, and of reptiles and insects, legion in variety and countless in number. The noblest beast, the creature which shows most "quality," is the bison—the magnificent bull, great in stature and in courage, beautiful in head and proportion; with its large clear eye, grand sharply-curved and pointed horns, its powerful body and smooth black hide, its fine limbs and small feet. The bison is also the most difficult of beasts to approach; for it is always on the alert, is quick to see, and has a marvellous sense of smell. In the eyes of sportsmen, it is the most desirable prize offered by Malay forests. The pursuit of this splendid quarry is not without danger. I can remember two Malay head-men, who at different times lost their lives by attempting to shoot bison with indifferent fire-arms, while Mr. H. C. Syers, Commissioner of Police, and one of the best and most

successful sportsmen in the Peninsula, was killed, only two years ago, by a wounded bison, which had already received a number of shots, and did not live to get away. In the case of one of the Malay headmen, news of the accident was carried to his brother, and he immediately went to the spot, found the bison standing over his victim, and killed the beast by a very lucky shot from a Snider rifle.

The bison is usually found in fairly open jungle, where it is possible to track. He frequents undulating country, in the neighbourhood of a clear mountain stream of fair size, and in the early mornings feeds in the grass land on its banks, and especially in the vicinity of a sulphur spring.

The rhinoceros is at once the most hideous and the rarest of Malayan big game ; but though he is dangerous, especially when wounded, he is a great lumbering brute, with a small eye and a thick hide ; and while he is fond of a lair in a cave, or under an overhanging rock, he takes his walks abroad in some seasons at the tops of high mountains, and in others in the most noisome swamps, where there is no great attraction in following him.

Speaking generally, the elephant and the tiger are the most interesting specimens of big game in the Peninsula. They are plentiful, and they are con-

stantly in evidence; the elephant as a tame, intelligent, useful, and even lovable beast, and the tiger as a wild, destructive, hateful terror. There are black leopards and honey-bears, tapir and deer, and the rare Malayan antelope, but they occupy a position somewhat different from that of the bison, the elephant, the rhinoceros, and the tiger.

It is very little hardship to spend a night or two watching for elephant in the Malay jungle. Here is one method. High up in a great tree, overhanging a small stream in the depths of a forest, is built a tiny covered platform, and on this platform two or three men can sit or lie and watch in turns. In the stream is a bed of black sulphurous mud, which seems to have a strange attraction for all kinds of game. Below it is a deep pool, convenient for bathing. One bank of the stream is rather high, the other low and sandy. The width of the water is clear of trees, and makes an open avenue in the forest, through which the moonlight streams, shedding a flood of light on spaces of sand and ripple, while overhanging bushes cast dark shadows over the deeper pools. The place is singularly lovely under these conditions; the quiet murmur of the stream, the warm Eastern night, the checkered moonlight, the strange jungle

noises, and the excitement of watching and expectation, all lend attractions to the vigil, and discount the annoyance of mosquitoes and sandflies and the discomfort of a cramped position. As the night wanes, the watcher may be rewarded by hearing the slow approach of a heavy-footed beast, leisurely feeding on the luxuriant vegetation through which he forces his way to the stream. Then there will be a sound of gentle splashing, and the eye may discern, somewhat indistinctly, one or more huge bodies bathing in a deep pool; swaying from side to side, dipping and rising, and evidently enjoying their sedate sport in the cool water. Without realising quite how or when it was done, the watcher becomes aware of the fact that the splashing has ceased. The game has gone, silently as it came, and the ripple of the stream over the stones is the only sound to break the stillness of the night.

Another long wait, and as the moon is setting, and throws a brilliant bluish light on the stretch of sand opposite the mudlick, there is a slight rustle of leaves, a cracking of twigs, and a huge, dark body emerges out of the misty cover into the open stream-space. The watcher has only time to see the moonlight glint on a white tusk, as the beast turns up-stream, and after walking a few yards, finds deeper

water, and there drinks and bathes. Then, slowly rising from the water, the elephant comes out of the shadow, and walks back on his tracks straight towards the gun. That is the opportunity for a steady shot, and if it is not fatal, a result hardly to be expected in that light and shooting from such an elevation, it will, with good luck, be sufficient to make the tusker's progress so slow that, with daylight, it will be an easy matter to follow and despatch him.

Except in the case of a dangerous rogue, I doubt whether there is any great satisfaction to be derived from the shooting of elephants, and this is specially the case when one has seen a good deal of them in captivity. Even for a pair of tusks, it seems at least wasteful to destroy so huge, and usually harmless, a beast which might, otherwise, live for a hundred years, and either become a useful beast of burden, or help to propagate others for that purpose. Apart from this view, I confess I like to know that these vast tracts of jungle are tenanted by herds of elephants, and it is a satisfaction to feel that they are preserved from indiscriminate slaughter, either by sportsmen or those who would hunt them for gain.

The Malays of Perak own a good many tame elephants, which have been captured in kraals or born in captivity. The method of capture and train-

ing is similar to that employed in India and Siam, and is sufficiently well known. Malay elephant-drivers, in directing their beasts, use a kind of elephant language, which comes from Siam, and seems to be well understood by the animals. Instances of the intelligence of these beasts are common enough, and any number of cases might be cited to prove it, but I may mention one of which I was myself a witness.

A good many years ago I was travelling, with two other Europeans, towards the Perak River. We had nineteen elephants, only about a dozen of them carrying burdens. The others were not sufficiently trained for that purpose, or were too young, and one of them was quite a baby, about a year old, and not more than three feet high. We had already been travelling for several days, when one afternoon we crossed the pass dividing the Larut and Perak River valleys, and descended a steep incline into the latter. The small elephant had been a constant source of amusement to us; his gambols were so quaint; his naughtiness so varied and engaging, that he kept the party in continual laughter. If ever he found a log of wood lying parallel to the path, he invariably tried to walk on it, and though he repeatedly fell off, he would



always get up again and persevere to the end. So enamoured was he of this amusement, that if he saw a log a little way off, he would not miss it, though it gave him great trouble to get at it. Then he took a fiendish delight in chasing stray Chinese woodcutters, charcoal-burners, and all the tribe of burden-bearers. Chinese are not used to elephants, don't like them, and avoid them as far as possible. But for any one carrying two heavy loads on a stick, it was impossible to avoid this irrepressible baby; and the invariable result was that, after a short chase and a useless effort to distance his pursuer, the coolie would drop his burden and dash into the jungle, where the elephant, having accomplished his purpose, disdained to follow the yellow man.

These constant alarms and excursions retarded the baby's progress considerably. Though he was often left behind for a few minutes, and would come up to the party with a terrible rush, threading his way between the legs of the older and more sedate members of the transport train, his mother became anxious if there was any long absence, and his nurse would go back and look for him, driving the truant before her. The mother was a carrier, and therefore not at liberty to give the necessary attention to her erring offspring, but still, she declined to go

on without him, if she thought he had got too far away. She had, however, delegated her duties to another quite grown-up elephant, which was not carrying any one or anything, so had plenty of time at her disposal. This was the nurse.

We were travelling over a jungle track, which necessitated walking in single file, and as we neared the foot of the slope leading into the Perak Valley, we came to a gigantic forest tree, which had fallen right across the path. Exactly in the path, a great slice of the tree had been sawn out and thrown on one side, so that coolies carrying loads might pass without having to get over the obstruction. All the elephants went a little way along the tree, to where the diameter was smaller, scrambled over, and then waited in a bunch on the other side. We asked the reason, and the drivers said they were waiting for the baby, which had last been seen, higher up the hill-side, chasing a Chinese coolie.

We tried to persuade the drivers to go on, but either they could not or would not. They said the elephants wanted to see the baby past the difficulty. Suddenly there was a noise of scattering leaves and rolling stones, and the baby ambled down the steep decline at a really hazardous pace, made straight for the cleft in the tree, dashed headlong into it, and

there stuck fast! Then he squealed lustily, and his mother thumped her trunk on the ground, trumpeted in a very high-pitched voice, and moved about in such an uneasy way that she nearly threw her passengers off her back.

The baby was caught very fairly by his ribs. He seemed to fit the aperture exactly; his head out in front, his tail behind, and his body held as in a vice. We were very curious to see what would happen, and we had not long to wait.

The nurse went to the tree, and clambered over it, where she had passed before. Then she slowly walked to the path, looking at the imprisoned culprit out of the corner of her eye as she passed his tail. She took a couple of steps up the path, and then, lowering her head, ran at the baby, smote him in the hinder parts with her forehead, and sent him about ten feet down the path on the other side of his house of detention. The ungrateful little beast never even looked round, but, with the impetus given him, started off on a quest for new opportunities of mischief. The nurse rejoined the party with—or so it seemed to me—a curious twinkle in her eye, as though she had administered chastisement, while apparently only discharging her duties in the most orthodox fashion.

The next day I saw the eighteen elephants take the baby across the wide and (for him) deep Perak River, and though, during the crossing, only the end of his trunk was visible, waving about in the air in vague and anguished protest, they managed to push him safely across; some of them always getting on the down-stream side of him to prevent his being carried away by the current. He crawled up the opposite bank with some lack of energy, but in a few minutes he was scouring the plain for goats and Malay children, with all his accustomed eagerness and resolution.

. . . . .

I was once stationed, for a few months, in Province Wellesley, the strip of British territory opposite the island of Penang. Every week I used to hold Court at two places, about ten miles apart, in the south of the Province. Whilst sitting one afternoon at the first of these places, I was informed that two Malay constables had been attacked by a tiger, on the road I had to traverse to reach the other Court, where I always spent the night. As soon as my work was finished, I borrowed a police rifle, and drove off in the half-gharry, known locally as a "shandry."

I had gone about seven miles, and it was past

6 P.M., when the pony suddenly shied across the road and stopped. I got out, thinking I smelt tiger, and examined the place. I was in the middle of a very long length of straight, level road, running through big forest. On either side of the road was a border of grass, with a wide but shallow ditch of running water between it and the jungle. Just in front of the spot where my pony had stopped, was a curious mark on the hard road. It was a good-sized circle, scratched on the surface of the road, as by the feet of some beast careering round and round. From this circle I followed the recent tracks of a large tiger, across the ditch into the jungle. There I stopped, for it was getting dark, and I had no desire to pursue the investigation further; so I persuaded the pony to pass over the infected ground, and drove on, another three miles, to the combined court-house and police station, where I was to spend the night.

On arrival, I asked whether any one there had seen a tiger, and, being answered in the affirmative, I said I should like to hear about it. So, while I was having my dinner, I sent for the heroes of the adventure, and this is the story as it came to me. I am responsible for what I have said of the state of the road, and for exactly repeating what I was told; but that is all.

The two men ushered into my presence were Malays. They were both constables—one was tall and lank, the other broad-shouldered, thick-set, and powerful. The tall man I will call Panjang—he was rather a feeble specimen—but the other was, I remember, named Mat; he belonged to the Marine Police, and a fine sturdy fellow at that.

I asked them kindly to tell me what had occurred, and they did so; first one and then the other taking up the narrative, as to the facts of which there was no difference of opinion. They had been whitewashing at the station where I held Court that afternoon, and, their work done, they had started about noon to walk home. Mat carried a long-handled whitewashing brush, and Panjang a Chinese umbrella. The journey was performed without incident till they reached the spot where my pony shied. There, without any warning, a tiger sprang out of the jungle into the middle of the road, right in front of them, barred their path, and roared at them in a very terrifying way. They confessed that they were stricken with a mortal fear (at least Panjang had no hesitation in making that admission), but, being Malays, they knew that flight, while absolutely useless if the beast chose to follow, would be almost certainly fatal. Under

such circumstances, Malay advice says, drop on one knee, and if you have a spear, hold the point towards the enemy and wait for his attack; if you have only a stick, make believe it is a spear, and the tiger may not recognise the difference. Therefore they both knelt down, Mat in front, holding the whitewashing brush in rest, and Panjang, under his wing, with the umbrella. The tiger advanced, roaring and lashing his tail; but Mat opposed a firm front with the whitewashing brush, and as the beast came close, propped at him so that he nearly painted his whiskers. The tiger skipped round, to take them in flank, but they turned on the pivot of their feet, and the brush was always there. The tiger evidently misdoubted this novel weapon, and suddenly changed his tactics. He slewed completely round, and, with his hind-feet, scratched furiously on the road, throwing a shower of sand and gravel at the constables. No doubt this movement was intended to blind and disconcert them, but Panjang covered his companion and himself with the umbrella, and though the tiger, in his endeavour to get under their guard, described a complete circle round them, the missiles thrown by his claws rattled harmlessly on the stout paper shield. Then, as suddenly as before, the beast faced round again,

only to find himself confronted by the long bristles of the whitewashing brush.

The constables said this went on for about twenty minutes (in my own mind I set it down at two or three), during which the tiger made a regular circus ring on the road, as he attacked alternately face foremost and tail foremost. Apparently disgusted with the stoutness and novel character of the resistance opposed to him, he leaped across the ditch and disappeared into the jungle as suddenly as he had come.

The constables picked themselves up, with fervent thanks to the Almighty, and quickly retreated down the road till they had put a considerable distance between themselves and the scene of their encounter.

The road was, as I have said, straight and flat; it was lonely and without habitation, and they were still in full view of the circus ring, when a party of eight or ten Chinese came in sight. The constables waited for them, and when the Chinese joined them, tried to explain that there was a tiger a few hundred yards farther on, and it might be well, as they had no weapon—not even a stick or an umbrella, only short trousers and wide Chinese hats—to wait until some one better equipped came along. The coolies



probably understood very little of what was said; anyhow they laughed and pursued their way, while the Malays, satisfied with their own experience, waited to see what would happen.

The Chinese, laughing and talking at the tops of their voices, soon reached the enemy's position, and in a moment the tiger sprang into the arena, creating the greatest disorder. Several of the Chinese fell into the ditches on either side of the road, while the others yelled and screamed, and some even wagged or threw their hats at the beast. This was too much for his majesty, and again he disappeared into the jungle; while the Chinese collected themselves and their scattered wits and proceeded on their way.

By-and-by some people, coming from the opposite direction, passed without molestation, and as the afternoon was waning, Mat and Panjang, with somewhat shaky knees, but relying on their proved weapons, started again, passed the Valley of the Shadow without hearing so much as a growl, and reached the station in safety.

My theory is that the tiger had a kill, probably a pig, in the jungle at the edge of the road. He was annoyed at being disturbed, but was not in search of food. Therefore he simply rushed out to com-

plain, and try to get a little peace while he made his meal. Finding this impossible, especially if parties of ten or a dozen Chinese might be expected at any moment, he made a virtue of necessity and took his dinner elsewhere.

There is a tiger story which is well known in Malaya, but deserves all the publicity that can be got for it. A few months ago a Malay, named Said, went out to cut wood at a place called Kepong, in the Malay State of Selangor. He took with him an old muzzle-loading gun, charged with a bullet and four buck-shot. He had not gone far into the jungle when he saw a tiger in front of him, at a distance of about twenty yards. Said raised his gun, fired, and dropped the tiger. He then cautiously approached, but as the beast did not move, Said went right up to it, and then, to his amazement, discovered that he had killed not one, but two tigers—a male and a female. Both these beasts were taken into Kuala Lumpur (the chief town of Selangor) to prove Said's claim to the Government reward. The tigress measured 7 feet 10 inches in length, and  $15\frac{1}{2}$  inches round the forearm; while the male, a young one, measured 7 feet  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches in length. Mr. A. L. Butler, the Curator of the Selangor Museum, carefully examined these

tigers, and wrote the following letter to the editor of the local newspaper, the *Malay Mail*:—

“DEAR SIR,—The account which appeared in your paper yesterday of the Malay at Kepong bagging a brace of tigers at one shot is so extraordinary, that a few further particulars ought to interest some of your readers.

“I made a *post-mortem* examination of these tigers last night, and the shot which killed them must indeed have been a marvellously lucky one.

“In one case a single buck-shot, no larger than a pea—I showed it to you last night, Mr. Editor—had struck the beast low down behind the shoulder, gone through the centre of the heart, and lodged under the skin on the other side. There was no other wound.

“The second tiger, too, had been killed by one of these insignificant pellets, which entered under the elbow, cut through the heart, and travelled on down the body. A second slug had struck the animal on the head, but this wound was only trifling. The Malay said the tigers were feeding on a deer when he came on them, and the truth of this was borne out by their stomachs being full of pieces of sambur flesh and hair. The tigress had also eaten a quantity of grass, a habit which has been observed before among the larger carnivora.

“The man’s story was told with every appearance of truth; indeed, he seemed to see nothing surprising in it at all.”

I have heard a good many strange tiger stories, but, I confess, I should have hesitated to repeat this one had the evidence been less convincing.

. . . . .

At a place called Senggat, in Perak, there is a small colony of foreign Malays; they are planters, and come from a place called Mandêling, in Sumatra. The settlement is out of the way; the people are seldom brought into contact with Government officers, and they know practically nothing of Government regulations. When the necessity arises, their affairs are managed by a head-man, one Raja Mahmud, a man of their own tribe. Otherwise they live apart, concerned only with the cultivation of their fields and orchards, and they have few dealings with the Malays of the country, by whom they are regarded as foreigners of a somewhat uncivilised type.

Three years ago, two men of this settlement, Ingonen and Jesuman, went out one morning in search of deer. They made for a place called Jerneh, at some distance from Senggat, and did not arrive there till past noon. Ingonen carried an old

musket, and Jesuman a chopping knife. After wandering about in a jungle of secondary growth, Jesuman, then a few paces behind his companion, saw a rhinoceros coming straight at Ingonen. The latter fired, but the beast charged home, caught the unfortunate man on its horn and went over him. Jesuman heard his friend call out, "Allah! Allah!" and having no means of rendering assistance, made the best of his way to Jerneh, where he reported what had happened. Two Malays immediately returned with Jesuman, to the place where the accident had happened, and found Ingonen lying on his back, covered with blood and terribly wounded, but still alive. The rhinoceros had moved away, but could still be heard grunting, at no great distance. There was a great hole through the man's chest, and deep wounds in the back of both his thighs; he groaned ceaselessly, and said, "Take me home." As they raised him, a thick stream of blood welled up through the hole in his chest, and while they carried him towards Jerneh, he could only moan and feebly mutter, "Allah! Allah!"

Ingonen died before the bearers reached Jerneh. The body was taken the same evening to Senggat, and buried the next day, by order of the priest in charge of the Mosque.

A report of the accident was carried to the nearest station, but a Malay detective threw suspicion on the tale, suggested foul-play, and said there was a rumour that the dead man had been shot by his companion, Jesuman. The magistrate of the district, therefore, directed a European officer to take an apothecary, go to Senggat, exhume the body, and examine it. Early in the morning after the day of burial, this officer went to Senggat, to carry out his instructions. He took with him a native apothecary, a Tamil, and also the head-man of the division—the *mukim*, as the Malays call it.

After a walk of six miles along a main road, the three turned into the jungle, and in a few minutes came out on the edge of the valley of Senggat. The village was hidden from general sight, but infinitely picturesque and attractive to any one who can appreciate Malay scenery. The first view of the place was obtained from a rising ground, overlooking a long, narrow valley, through which wound a small, clear stream. The stream irrigated a fair stretch of rice-land, then newly planted, and brilliant with emerald tones. From the higher end of this field rose a small hill, crowned by a quaintly-constructed plank Mosque, and all the valley was shut in by undulating country, covered with dark-green coffee

trees, orchards, and jungle. Through the rich foliage of the palms and fruit trees were caught glimpses of brown cottages, thatched with grass or *atap*, and beyond all rose distant purple hills. It was a glorious morning, and an Eastern sun flung down light and colour from a cloudless sapphire sky.

The visitors were evidently expected, and as soon as they appeared, some men, standing on the hill by the temple, shouted a warning, and immediately every house sent its quota of men, women, and children, walking and running and scrambling up to the Mosque.

The three strangers made their way down into the valley, crossed the stream, and climbed the hill to the Mosque, where they found the whole population assembled. The local chief, Raja Mahmud, was absent, but his agent, and the priest of the Mosque, listened while the officer described his business and the cause of it. Then they said that the grave could not be opened. The burial had been properly conducted, the sun would get on the corpse, and the apothecary would certainly want to cut the body up; these, they said, were all good reasons for declining to do as they were desired.

Directly the women heard these objections raised by the men, they, and the children, went in a body

and sat upon the newly-made grave, which was on the hill, only a few feet in front of the Mosque.

There was a small bamboo platform in front of the Mosque; the platform had a lean-to roof, and here the English officer argued the case with the village elders. But all to no purpose. The majority was inflexible, and the majority was numerous. Meanwhile the women and children, about forty strong, squatted close together on the grave, and broke into a wild dirge, the burden of which seemed to be a request to the officer not to disturb their dead. The strange picturesqueness of the scene, with all these quaintly-clad people, adding new colour, life, and incident to an already striking picture, did not wholly compensate the officer for the foiling of his purpose. Finding argument useless, he stated his determination to remain there till the grave was opened and the body exhumed; but as the chief objection seemed to be to the Tamil apothecary, the officer agreed that he should not touch the body. Even then the authority of the Malay head-man had to be exercised before the priest and the agent would send for spades. When the implements arrived, the women and children only huddled closer together, entirely covering the grave, and continued to wail their lament in a higher



key. As the local authorities seemed nonplussed, matters were again at a standstill, when the officer had a happy inspiration.

“Is it true,” he inquired, “that the Mandêlings are ruled by their women?”

Raja Mahmud’s agent, without replying to the question, got up and drove the women away.

A scarlet cloth, with a broad white border, was then fixed on four poles over the grave, to keep the sun off the coffin, and three men began to dig out the earth in a very half-hearted fashion. With many halts and rests, the work was at last accomplished, and the poor body, with its ghastly wounds, exposed to view. There was no doubt about the cause of death, and the apothecary was not allowed even to see the dead man. The officer, leaving the villagers to the noisome task of reburial, returned to his station, glad to get away from the vicinity of a two-days-old corpse.

## AFTER THE IMPRESSIONISTS

IN Perak, and in other parts of the Malay Peninsula, there is a common belief in the existence—saving the word—of an invisible tribe called the *orang bányi-an*. That is, “the people who make sounds,” in distinction to those who can be seen. This superstition is of ancient origin, and the “sound-folk” are supposed to frequent certain secluded places, usually streams or swamps in the heart of the jungle, where they are heard, by woodcutters and other venturesome people, paddling their phantom boats through the water, talking, singing, but very rarely, if ever, disclosing themselves to mortals. In Perak, it is stated, that one or other of the sound-folk sometimes conceives a fancy for some man or woman, and, by occult powers, gives valuable information or assistance. They are harmless, and their power to remain invisible sometimes leads to strange situations. If, on rare occasions, one of them does appear, he or she assumes the guise of a

Malay, and the connection with the *orang blunyi-an* is usually established by an excessive generosity in money matters, and invariably after the stranger has departed.

There is a small hill called Gĕliong, on the right bank of the Perak River, about 150 miles from its mouth. There is a tradition of a foundered treasure-ship at this place, and the word *Gĕliong* is, in all probability, a Malay corruption of galleon. Near this hill there lived, some fifty years ago, a man called Anjang Asin. He was a landowner, well to do, dwelt in a good house, and amongst his retainers was a young girl called S'mas (the Golden One), a sort of maid-of-all-work and general drudge. The master was a hard man, and not over-honest. The maid was willing, and when not employed in the house cooking, sewing, pounding rice, or carrying water—at every one's beck and call—she was made to work in the rice-fields; hoeing, planting, reaping, or gleaning, according to the season.

In spite of the many duties thrust upon S'mas, it was noticed that her work was always done without effort, and the family soon realised that this was the result of supernatural agency. The work was done for her by invisible hands, and a voice—*vox et præterea nihil*—declared that the assistance was

rendered by one of the sound-folk, a woman, who called herself Sura Indra, but the Malays gave her the title of *Toh Moyang*—that is to say, the great-great-grandmother. The voice of this spirit-presence soon became well known in the house. It joined in conversations, talked and sang to itself, or to S'mas, and seemed to take a special delight in lecturing Anjang Asin; a treat which he failed to relish, but from which he did not know how to protect himself.

Toh Moyang, taking the master to task, advised him not to be deceitful on the weights; not to use a large measure when he bought, and a small one when he sold. Further, she upbraided him with inhospitality, and told him to be more liberal, saying that he need not be afraid to spend, for she would help him. Anjang Asin became enraged, and replied, "What is the use of talking to me? you don't help; you don't give me gold."

"You have gold," said Toh Moyang, meaning, of course, the girl S'mas.

One night thieves broke into the house of Anjang Asin, and were just removing a box of valuables, when Toh Moyang called out, "Thieves! thieves!" The master jumped up, and the thieves fled, leaving the box on the threshold.

The agency of Toh Moyang was specially noticed when S'mas was ordered to plant out the *padi*. For what is called wet padi, a small nursery is planted, and the seed comes up like a thick crop of intensely green grass. When the shoots are about eighteen inches high, they are pulled up by the roots, carried to the already prepared fields, and planted out by the women. The seedlings are usually planted out in the water-covered fields with an iron prong, and a clever hand does the work very rapidly. When S'mas went planting, any one could see that for every rice-stalk which she planted, an invisible hand put in at least twice as many more. The sight of these seedlings walking out of the bundle and sitting down, one by one, in the water and mud of the irrigated field, excited great astonishment.

The strange doings of Toh Moyang, and especially the scoldings from which he could not protect himself, got on Anjang Asin's nerves, and he went round to the district chief, and all his neighbours, complaining of his unhappy fate, and asking if any one could tell him how to get rid of the voice-woman.

One of the neighbours, a certain Che Manggek, at once undertook the job, saying he knew the whole art of dealing with spirits, and he would make the necessary incantations, and relieve Anjang Asin of

the presence of Toh Moyang. Accordingly one day Che Manggek went to the house, with a great posse of his friends and admirers, but when he got to the door, the voice of Toh Moyang called out to him, "Welcome, Manggek ! You have come to exorcise me ; to render me helpless and drive me away ; well, try your best, I am waiting to see what you can do." When he heard this, Manggek began, in a loud voice, to declaim all his most famous incantations for the casting out of evil spirits ; but the voice of Toh Moyang was heard above his voice, abusing him and making fun of him, till the crowd laughed, and Manggek ran away.

A famous priest, one Imam Dorâni, hearing of Che Manggek's adventure, said, "Manggek went to exorcise this spirit with all his superstitious rubbish, and of course he failed. I will go and cast out this demon in the name of God."

Anjang Asin bade him come and do his best ; but before the Imam had even reached the door of the house, the voice of Toh Moyang was heard, saying, "Manggek came here with ten fingers, and thought to drive me away. Now you have come with only six fingers ; do you think you can succeed where he failed ?"

Dorâni, the priest, from his birth deformed in one

hand, was so disconcerted by this uncanny and outspoken knowledge on the part of the spirit he had undertaken to lay, that he incontinently fled, and Anjang Asin resigned himself to the tyranny of the inevitable.

By this time, the doings and sayings of Toh Moyang were the gossip of the country-side, and, eventually, they came to the ears of the Raja Muda (that is, the heir-apparent), who sent for Anjang Asin, in order that he might hear all about this supernatural manifestation. The Raja Muda was then at a place called Bukit Gantang—the Hill of the Gallon-measure—and Anjang Asin duly obeyed the summons. Bukit Gantang is now a roadside hamlet, the centre of an extensive rice-field, but a poor place for all that. In those days it was the residence of the most wealthy chief in Perak, the home of his wives, the centre of his authority, a half-way house where the most lavish hospitality was dispensed to all comers, and the rendezvous of most of the beauty, intelligence, and bravado of the Perak ruling classes.

There was the hill, a slight elevation, planted with palms and fruit trees, under the shade of which were dotted about the dwellings of the chief, his wives, and people. These houses and gardens and

orchards, occupying the whole of the rising ground, were surrounded by a high brick wall, through which gates and doors led, on one side to the main road, and on another to a lake, the water lapping the western base of the hill, from the road in front right round to the back, where rose, sheer from the plain, a range of lofty jungle-covered mountains.

It was worth a journey to see that stretch of water, running out and in round the projections and indentations of the low hill which sat, behind its encircling wall, dreaming over the silent mere. Not that there was anything wonderful about the lake beyond its picturesque setting. The wonder was that in it grew legions of lotus lilies, so that only occasional spaces of water—dazzling mirrors, reflecting the sapphire sky and the fleecy white clouds—lay, like ever-changing pictures, amid their marvellous framing. But the frames: the lotus leaves! the lotus flowers! the lotus fruit! They were a sight to see. It was a very jungle of lotuses. Great circular leaves, spread flat on the surface of the mere, with fat globules of water, like gigantic dew-drops, sliding or resting on their green velvety faces. Forests of stalks, short and long, bearing the glorious wave-edged leaves, bending slightly over, and gleaming with the marvellous bloom which gives to



their green softness an indescribable sheen of blue. Then there were thousands of flowers; beds and clusters and isolated stems, of buds and blossoms in every shade, from deepest to palest pink, only the full-blown flowers disclosing their yellow centres. Scattered about in every direction, amidst these leaves and blossoms, were hundreds of lotus fruit; the green pod, shaped like the rose of a watering-can, with a yellow seed peeping through every eyelet. As the fruit ripens, the stalk becomes black, the curious pod takes hues of heliotrope and brown, the eyelet holes open, and the seeds fall into the water, sink, take root and shoot again.

Over the surface of the mere flitted myriads of dragon-flies, scarlet and orange and turquoise-blue; they dipped their transparent wings in the water, and, when tired of chasing each other, rested on the leaves and flowers of the lotus.

A single tree stood in the middle of the lake, where the lotus lilies grew thickest. It was quite a small tree, but it held a dozen nests of the tailor-bird, and more than half of them were perching-places for the males. There was a ceaseless twittering from the tree, but the skilful weavers of these elaborate houses seemed as fond of sitting on the roofs as on the carefully protected perches. At

least that was the case with the male birds. No inquisitive eye was permitted to intrude upon the seclusion of the seamstresses.

Far away, where the mountain slope rose steeply from the mere, and a stretch of open water blinked under the scorching rays of the sun, there swam, and dived, and fought, a flock of dark-plumaged teal; shy birds which, at the slightest sound of danger, would rise heavily from their cover. Then, with much whistling and clatter of wings, they circled round the lake at a safe height; till, having selected their point, they would stretch out into a long line, and, flying high and strong, disappear into space.

Certainly the Hill of the Gallon-measure was a place to see; but it is doubtful whether its attractions appealed to Anjang Asin, when he arrived there late one afternoon in obedience to a summons from the Raja Muda, to satisfy that chief's curiosity concerning the sound-woman.

The visitors were accommodated in the house of one Pandak Leman, a house within the wall. As soon as their arrival was known, the Raja Muda sent a messenger to inquire whether they had brought Toh Moyang. Anjang Asin replied that he was quite unable to answer that question, but he had brought the girl S'mas,

Round the side of the hill, opposite to that where lay the lake, there wound a small clear rivulet, and thither at sunset the strangers went to bathe, as is the custom of all Malays. One of the girls of the party, on seeing the brook, said, "I have heard a deal of this place, of its wealth and its greatness, and I expected to find a splendid river, far finer than the sunbeam of our Perak Valley. Is this the river of much-vaunted Bukit Gantang?" Then a voice, which they all recognised as that of Toh Moyang, answered mockingly, "River, indeed, this miserable streamlet! I could make a better myself."

So, when the women returned to the house of Pandak Leman, they told what had occurred, and the news was carried to the Raja Muda that surely Toh Moyang was there.

Shortly afterwards the visitors dined, and when they had eaten their rice, the voice of Toh Moyang asked for dates. A dish of the fruit was served, and while the guests were eating it, every one saw and heard date seeds fall on the floor, as though thrown down from the ceiling. About this time a message was brought from the Raja Muda, to say that he would come to Pandak Leman's house to talk with Toh Moyang. Before any one could make

any reply, Toh Moyang said, "The Raja Muda come here to talk to me! That would not be right. I will go myself to his Highness." The messenger accordingly returned to his master, and told what he had heard. The girl S'mas was sent up to the Raja Muda, and the large company assembled there waited expectantly to hear the sound-woman. With a perverseness only met with in bodiless females, Toh Moyang declined to utter a word, and this disappointing result was ascribed to the presence of an unsympathetic person, who had derided the popular belief in spirit-voices. As there was no manifestation, S'mas was sent back to the house of Pandak Leman, and a courtier from the suite of the Raja Muda, one Che Lobih, came to try his own fortune. He was reputed a very skilful talker, this Che Lobih, and he made an earnest appeal to the voice to let him hear her speak. To his great delight, Toh Moyang said—

"Well, I am here; what is it you want?"

Che Lobih answered, "I have a request to make. You are a very clever woman, and I want you to give me knowledge."

"What would you know?" asked the voice.

"I would know," said Che Lobih, "the secret of winning a woman's heart."

"Why do you seek that?" asked the voice; "always that, and only that."

"Never mind, then," replied the courtier. "But tell me how I can win you, Toh Moyang, for it is you I want."

But the great-great-grandmother only deigned to speak the oracular words, "*Asing dhdok-nya.*"

Literally interpreted, this means, "It is somewhere else you wish to sit." The saying has become proverbial, and, amongst the upper classes in Perak, is commonly used as a polite way of signifying doubt of the genuineness of an expressed wish or intention.

When Che Lobih had retired to relate his experiences to the Raja Muda, the house of Pandak Leman was closed for the night. The master was lying sick of a fever, and he asked for some one to massage him. Immediately the voice of Toh Moyang said, "I will massage you;" and at once the sick man felt his limbs gently and deftly pinched and rubbed by a cool soft hand. Pandak Leman, relieved and delighted, said, "I thank you, Toh Moyang; I have a great desire to feel your hand—will you allow me?"

"Yes," said the voice; "here is my arm, you can feel it."

Pandak Leman put out his hand and touched a smooth soft arm. Passing his fingers over the skin, he suddenly tried to seize the wrist, but found he held nothing. Then the voice said, "You must not try to hold me; you cannot. You did not ask for that, and I should not have consented. I have massaged you, and you must give me something for my trouble. I want to buy things for S'mas."

Pandak Leman said, "Certainly, I will give you something; where is your hand?" At the same time he took out two silver dollars.

Toh Moyang replied, "My hand is ready; drop the dollars."

Pandak Leman dropped the dollars, and they disappeared without ever reaching the floor.

The next day Anjang Asin, S'mas, and the rest of the party returned to Bukit Gěliong, and from time to time Toh Moyang continued her admonitions, which were persistently ignored by Anjang Asin. At last a great disaster befell the man. The building in which he kept stored the whole of the season's rice crop took fire, and was utterly destroyed. From that day the voice of Toh Moyang was never heard by Anjang Asin or any of his family.

The Sultan of Perak, speaking to me of this

superstition concerning the voice-people, and the story of Anjang Asin's experiences, said, "Many years afterwards, when Anjang Asin was an old man, nearing death and afraid to lie, I asked him whether Toh Moyang had really burned his padi store. He answered, 'I dare not say Toh Moyang burned it, for I did not see her do it; but I had no enemies, and from the day of the fire I never heard her voice again.'"

## AN "OLD MASTER"

BEFORE British influence was known in the Malay States—that is, before the year 1874—there lived in one of them a Malay chief who, partly by reason of his rank, more by his wealth, and most by his cunning, seemed destined to play a conspicuous part in the affairs of his country.

The State to which he belonged was one of the largest, most populous, and important in the Peninsula, and when Wan Jafar was about five-and-thirty years of age, he found himself the holder of a high office, which carried with it a great title, unlimited power within an extensive district, and a rapidly-increasing revenue from the development of vast stretches of country rich in minerals. He owned several steamers, houses, and property within and without the confines of what was, practically, his own territory; and he had at his command a small force of foreign mercenaries wherewith to



keep in order the Chinese miners on whose industry he depended for his revenues. As I have said, he was a dignitary of the State, and his father had held the same office before him; but for all that, he was not a man of high birth, nor yet of pure Malay blood. His wealth gave him a commanding position in the country, and his astuteness (a quality which he probably derived from his non-Malay ancestors) enabled him to use it in a way that not only made him acceptable to the ruler, but suggested schemes of personal aggrandisement which contained good promise of fulfilment. About this time the Sultan of the country died, and, owing to a variety of circumstances which it is needless to go into here, the rightful heir was set aside, and a foreign Raja, who could only claim connection with the State through his mother, was elected to the chief power. The new Sultan was a great personal friend of Wan Jafar, who was mainly responsible for his election, and there is little doubt that the minister put forward his nominee with the shrewd intention of stepping into his shoes. Under ordinary circumstances the appointment of a state-officer—a man with no claim to royal blood—to be the ruler of a Malay country, would be outside the realm of possibility. That had, however, happened elsewhere,

and if once ancient customs were set aside, and a precedent established, Wan Jafar relied upon his power, wealth, and intelligence to do the rest. Granted that he could secure the acceptance, as Sultan, of one who had no claim by birth, he reflected that his friend, who was already an old man, might in time be persuaded to retire in his favour. Money and a supple tongue would draw the waverers to his side.

The scheme was feasible, and for a time things went well enough ; but the minister had left out of his reckoning, or too easily discarded, two important factors—the rightful but disappointed claimant, and the British Government. It was excusable that the claimant should be treated as a *quantité négligeable*, for, indeed, he was a poor thing, wanting in spirit in money, and in friends. As for the British, they had never concerned themselves with Malay affairs, and there was no reason why they should do so now. Of all the people in the country, none knew them so well as Wan Jafar. That a combination of the rejected heir and the British Government should bring about his own discomfiture, and that partly owing to the action of a section of his Chinese miners, never occurred to him.

It was, however, that very combination, assisted

by subsequent events, which deposed Wan Jafar from place and power, and sent him thousands of miles away, to ruminate on his lost opportunities and throttled ambitions. Hardest of all to bear, the sentence passed upon him involved the breaking-up of his home, and separation from his wives and children, relatives and friends.

At the zenith of his prosperity, Wan Jafar had married a girl of equal rank with himself and of better family. I cannot say what she was like then, but when I first saw her, she was certainly a woman of remarkable appearance. I used to imagine she might resemble Cleopatra, though that was no great compliment to the Egyptian queen. It was not, however, her undoubtedly striking face which distinguished this lady from other Malay women, so much as her uncompromising hostility to the British Government, to its officers, and all their works. Later I found that, in this attitude, she included a good many of her own nationality as well, and while it was mainly due to inherent peculiarities of character, it was aggravated by circumstances of which she was the unfortunate victim.

As the principal wife of the wealthiest and most powerful chief in the land, her every wish had been gratified; and being a very determined, masterful,

and extravagant lady, her wishes were numerous and expensive. I may say here that, with a Malay woman, the test of real affection on the part of a man, be he husband or lover, is the extent of his generosity. The most extravagant protestations of love, without gifts to prove their reality, are but as siren-voices to the deaf. The sincerity and value of the lover's vows are gauged by his liberality, in trinkets and other costly trifles. I suppose this discrimination is the result of generations of experience. It is not in any way resented by Malay men; on the contrary, they accept the position, and do what they can to perpetuate it. There are exceptions; of course, there always are, but in this respect they are rare. If nothing of the kind is known in more enlightened countries, the moral depravity of these people must be ascribed to original sin and the climate. Whatever the cause, the melancholy fact remains, and if the position is rightly understood, there will be some sympathy with Wan Jafar's wife, when she suddenly found herself deprived of all that had helped to make her one of the greatest ladies in the land. I may be doing her a wrong, but it is possible that her feelings would have been less bitter if she had, instead of losing everything, received some material compensation for

the loss of her husband; such, for instance, as railway companies give in case of serious accidents.

Besides the principal wife to whom I have already referred, Wan Jafar was the husband of another lady, Che Dewi, renowned throughout the country for the charm (well recognised by Malays) which belongs to wit, intelligence, and the voice which is "soft and low"; attractions which may accompany good looks, but are oftener found apart from them, lending to a face where there are no striking features a beauty of its own.

As may easily be imagined, there was a very real rivalry between these two wives. Both were young (Che Dewi being little more than a girl); both, in their different ways, the objects of admiration and flattery; both rich in all that a wealthy and powerful husband could give them, and both of widely divergent characters.

When Wan Jafar fell from his high estate, lost everything a man values, and was banished to a distant island, he invited these two ladies to accompany him in his exile. But they declined. Considering his circumstances, and the very small sum allowed him to live upon, the refusal was probably a blessing in disguise. I don't think that was the light in which he regarded it, but he disappeared,

and for over twenty years Malay society only heard of him through the post.

From the date of their husband's banishment, a moderate allowance was allotted to the principal wife, who had two sons, and a smaller sum to Che Dewi, who had one. After some years, Che Dewi lost her boy, and applied to her husband to release her, but he declined. That was his revenge.

As time went on, she applied again and again, but still the husband refused, until at last the Sultan of the State took the matter up, and a divorce was duly granted. Che Dewi at once married again, and the other wife, her former rival, was full of scorn for the backsliding of this weaker vessel. But Time is a great chastener, and, under his influence, others besides the Psalmist learn to repent of the things said in haste. Therefore it happened that, after ten or twelve years, the smart, high-born wife also wrote to her husband and asked for a divorce, pointing out that the circumstances were very unusual, and there was no prospect of his return. Wan Jafar, as to the other, replied that there was nothing to prevent her joining him, and therefore he declined to fall in with her proposal. Further demands were met by the same answer, and at last an appeal to the Sultan—who is head of the Church as well as of

the State—resulted in a divorce for the principal wife.

It was during, and subsequent to, these negotiations that this lady used to honour me with a good deal of her society. She always came with one or more requests, and invariably backed them up with the statement that, if not granted, she would leave the State—a contingency that she no doubt hoped would fill me with dread, and, if carried into effect, cover me with opprobrium.<sup>1</sup> If I remained inflexible, she would hurl at me a more dire and portentous threat, namely, that "she would be transported to Bombay." I don't think she knew what, or where, Bombay was; but as she was more used to hectoring than tearful appeals, this was her method of approaching the tyranny, which she felt was responsible for the banishment of her husband and her own fallen fortunes. We made friends at last, to such an extent that, her own grievances settled, as far as they were capable of settlement, she used to come weekly, almost daily, as a sort of professional intermediary, to give voice to the very bitter cries of the legions of the aggrieved, who, in the East, believe that there is somewhere a Fountain of Justice, with whom redress is merely a matter of will.

<sup>1</sup> See page 35.

After an exile of over twenty years, Wan Jafar returned, not to his own country—that was still forbidden ground—but to a place within easy reach of it.

It is more than likely that, in what has been written, I seem to have been wandering about over quite uninteresting ground, with no definite purpose. I cannot help it if that is the impression conveyed. I have come to the purpose now, and in the light of the sequel, the details will, I trust, be accepted as suitably inconsequent.

For some years before her first husband's return from exile, Che Dewi had been divorced from her second husband. Moreover, she had made the pilgrimage to Mecca, had returned with the title of Haji, and a new name, which I need not mention. As soon as she heard that Wan Jafar, now an old and broken man, was within a few hundred miles, she hastened to meet and welcome him. The result of that journey was that, in a few weeks, it was known that Che Dewi had been re-married to her original husband.

The news of this event was accepted with equanimity by every one except Wan Jafar's principal wife, who, in all these years, had never got over her jealousy of her rival and co-partner in the affections



of the once-powerful chief. Months passed, and the lady meditated constantly on a visit to the man from whom she had been so long separated, but to whose position as husband she had accepted no successor, though the possibility had no doubt been contemplated. The knowledge that her rival was re-installed kept Cleopatra away, but when Wan Jafar came to visit a place within a few hours' journey of his old home, she decided that it was incumbent on her to go and see her former husband, with whom she had never had any real cause of quarrel. Accordingly, she went—the last of all the family to visit Wan Jafar. One who was present described the meeting as strangely pathetic; she, a quite old woman, according to Eastern notions, and he, a bent and infirm old man, so blind that he could not see her till she was in his arms. In a few days Wan Jafar re-married this wife also.

The whole party then returned to Wan Jafar's place of residence, where, within a few weeks, he sickened and died. After his death the two women—rival wives and bitter enemies, *divorcées*, re-married wives, and now joint-widows—returned together to their native country, to live in the same house the closest of friends!

## A LINE ENGRAVING

AFTER a long journey by sea and land, by rail and road, I was again, for perhaps the hundredth time, looking down on the Malay's earthly paradise. The place recalled a crowd of incidents, curious and varied enough to fill the longest day-dream. But the actors were gone—many buried, some at the ends of the earth, others near, but out of sight—all were changed in a greater or less degree. Only the stage was the same.

From the smooth green lawn where I stood, I looked down a succession of terraces—terraces connected by a long flight of steep stone steps—to a great wide river. The water was shallow and clear, running over a bed of sand. A picturesque village, sheltered—almost shut out from my sight—by palms and graceful evergreen trees, nestled low down on the right bank. A large island, with gardens and a few cottages, guarded its river front, while a smaller island, grass-grown and solitary, lay farther out in

the stream. Many boats of quaint build, some hauled up on shore, others fastened to poles driven into the bed of the river, broke the shore-line by the village. A group of cattle, standing knee-deep in the water, and here and there a long, narrow dug-out, laden with passengers being ferried across the river, gave life to a picture which impressed one with a sense of absolute peace and restfulness. On the far bank stood a great forest tree, and I remembered how plainly that tree, and its reflection mirrored in the water, were visible from a mountain-top distant eight miles as the crow flies. For the rest, the river ran straight back in a four-mile reach, narrowing gradually with the distance till the sheen of water disappeared in the haze of forest. Directly behind that spot, a range of sapphire hills lay, barrier-like, across the river's track. Right and left, two other higher ranges, jungle-clad from base to summit shut in the valley drained by that broad, shining stream.

Miles away westward, the sun was sinking behind a great limestone rock, 2000 feet high, and as the shadows lengthened, the hills were swept by waves of momentarily changing colour, till every feature, every spur and hollow, was defined, as by opal-tinted shafts thrown from a heavenly search-light.

As the light died, all colour faded into a grey sameness, and the land was shrouded in a winding-sheet of river mist. The cool night wind, creeping from out the jungle freshness, came rustling across the stream, stirring the water into tiny wavelets, and barring its surface with spaces of dancing silvery light and smooth motionless shadow. Between the fronds of lofty palms, infinitely graceful yet infinitely sad—their slightly bent heads black against the grey background—I saw the new moon; a circle drawn by a bow pen, charged with the essence of light, and slightly pressed as it described a third of the circumference. A curious effect; for the circle was undefined, except in that third, and there was no apparent difference between the colour of the sky within the ring and that surrounding it. It might have been a sickle of pale gold, holding, cup-like, an eclipsed moon; and yet the eye could detect no outline to the eclipse, nor any variance in tone between the round moon-space and its background.

The strange contrast between daylight and darkness, between what had been a moment ago and what was now, recalled a tale I had heard, and a tragedy that had been enacted, years ago, on the bank of this river-reach.

A British military expedition had been despatched

to this State, at a moment's notice, and the troops engaged were divided into two forces ; one sent from China, operating down-river, and the other, composed of troops from India, encamped on the very hill where I stood. I myself was with the first force, and, for a time, all the fighting to be got was theirs. That, of course, was very annoying to the later arrivals, stationed here with nothing to do but gaze on this Malay paradise, which I have no doubt they regarded as a very indifferent compensation for their hurried despatch from India—the soldier's paradise. Anyhow, they beat about for some means of employment, and, failing anything better, it was determined to capture a noted Malay brave, one Raja Abas, who was said to be in the neighbourhood. This Raja Abas, native of an upland State, had once been arrested for a river piracy, and lodged in prison in one of the neighbouring British Settlements. Before he could be tried, he broke out of jail, killed a guard at the gate, and made good his escape. That had occurred some years before, and at the time of the expedition he was said to be living in hiding, at a hut on the bank of the river, about four miles above the British camp.

To each of the two forces composing the expedition were attached civil commissioners, and with

each was a naval brigade. So far, the fighting had been down-river, and though the trees on the banks of the long river-reach, seen from this hill, concealed a scattered but populous village, inhabited by people with a reputation for lawlessness second to none in the country, they had, up to the time I write of, kept out of the fray, and made no hostile demonstration. Meanwhile, the presence of Raja Abas in the neighbourhood had been reported, and some one, remembering his history, brought the facts to the notice of the military authorities. That was how matters stood when——

All this flashed through my mind, and that was the point at which I remembered that I might hear the tale from an eye-witness. Within call, there was a native who, I knew, could speak to the facts; though I also knew that his own part in the proceedings was not one of which to be proud. Perhaps that was mainly the reason why he had never been popular with the Malays of this district. However, the only point of importance was, that I wanted to hear the facts, and he could supply them. I sent for him, and in a few minutes he arrived.

“You remember,” I said, “the case of Raja Abas and the other man?”

“Certainly.”

“ You had something to do with it ? ”

“ Why, it was I who gave the information about him, and when it was determined that he should be arrested, I undertook to do it myself.”

“ Well ? ”

“ You want to hear all about it ? ”

“ Yes, I do.”

“ I will tell you. I had known Raja Abas for some time. We were great friends, he and I, and he trusted me. He also knew two brothers, Panjang Biru and Skola, who had a cottage up there, where he often stayed. I knew them too; indeed, we were all friends and comrades. When the trouble came, and white soldiers occupied this hill, I was employed by the civil officer, because I knew every one in the neighbourhood, and could keep him informed of all that was going on. That was how I came to mention the fact that Raja Abas was here; and, when invited to do so, I undertook to arrest him.

“ He was not a native of this country—he was a foreigner; but he had a great reputation for valour and resource, and every one said he was invulnerable. For these reasons I had to be very careful how I went about the business of catching him. After several visits to Panjang Biru’s cottage, where

Raja Abas usually lodged, I determined to get him away to the house of a relation of mine for his evening meal, and to put into his rice some of the seed of the *malikien*, which would make him sick, and then, with some friends I had, I thought I could overpower him. Unless I could make him sick, I did not see how I could take him alive; for every one said he was afraid of no one, and that he was invulnerable.

“First, then, I told Panjang Biru that I was going to arrest Raja Abas, and I warned him that he must on no account say anything about it. I promised he should come to no harm, if he did not interfere. I had to tell him, so that I might get Raja Abas away, and I also wanted to prevent Biru siding with the Raja if it came to a struggle. I arranged it with him; but I was not so sure of his brother, a hot-headed fellow, and very devoted to Raja Abas, so I said nothing to him. No doubt Panjang Biru warned his brother that something was in the wind, but I don't think he said anything till the evening when I had arranged to carry out my plan.

“Everything went as I had hoped it would, and in the afternoon I met Raja Abas and the brothers in Panjang Biru's cottage, and persuaded the Raja to come with me to a house, nearer this way, where



one of my relatives lived. Biru stayed at home, but the brother accompanied us, and having told the man who prepared our food what to do, we took the evening meal.

“That stuff which makes you sick, that *malikien* seed, is very bitter, and I think the man must have put too much of it into Raja Abas’s rice, for he said there was something wrong, and, shortly after eating, began to suffer pain, and I advised him to come with me to an empty hut, hard by, where I thought it would be easier to deal with him. At first he was angry, and said, if he had been in any one else’s house he would have believed he was poisoned, and known what to do; but with me, his friend, he thought such treachery was impossible. At last I got him away, and then left him with Skola. My plan was to wait till the sickness had made him weak, because he was such a valiant man I thought we could not tackle him otherwise. I had arranged with three or four men, friends of mine, to wait in and near this empty house, and I promised to return about 10 P.M., when I thought we could capture him without much trouble.

“Whilst I was away, Skola told the Raja that I had poisoned him, and meant to arrest him; so he got up—in spite of his sickness—seized his weapons

(he carried a very famous *kris* amongst other things), and went away with Skola to Panjang Biru's cottage. My men, who were lying in wait, saw him go; indeed, Raja Abas invited those in the hut, if they thought to kill him, to come on; but they dared not do anything, because of his reputation and his *kris*, which was said to make him invincible.

"When I returned, late at night, I found the whole plan had failed, and of course there was then no chance of taking Raja Abas quietly; so I had to return here and tell the white officers what had happened.

"I understood that a party would go up-river and arrest Raja Abas, and it was arranged that they should travel by boat, starting at night, so as to reach Panjang Biru's hut at daylight. About twenty blue-jackets formed the party, with an officer and my master. I noticed that they took a long thick rope with them, but I did not know what it was for.

"The boats went so slowly that it was broad daylight long before we got to our destination, and it must have been 9 A.M. when we reached Panjang Biru's hut, and surrounded it. On examining the place, we found it empty; but the rice for the morning meal was all ready set out, and we knew that those we sought could only lately have left the place.

"The cottage was near the river bank, and fresh

footmarks led straight inland. We followed them, and passing through the belt of orchards, came out on the long stretch of rice-fields which lie between the village and the hills. As we came into the light, we saw a man walking quickly by the fence which divides the *kampong* from the grain-land. The white men asked me, and I told them it was Panjang Biru.

“The civil officer called him, and when he came, said, ‘Are you the man named Panjang Biru?’

“He answered, ‘I am he, sir.’

“‘Where are Raja Abas and your brother?’ inquired the officer.

“‘They have gone,’ replied Panjang Biru; and he added, ‘I can go after them and fetch them.’

“‘We cannot let you go,’ said the officer; ‘you are going to be hanged—now.’

“‘You can send a man’ (and he named a villager) ‘with me, and I will try to find them,’ said Panjang Biru; but they said they would hang him. So, having disarmed him, and tied his hands behind him, the sailors marched him off to a great *Bungor* tree—the tree with violet blossoms growing all along its boughs—which stood in the *kampong*, some little distance back along the road we had come. When he heard he was to be hanged, Panjang Biru said,

'I have done no wrong ; but of course you can hang me if you wish. I have not eaten ; let me eat first.' That was all I heard before they led him away.

"I waited where I was, for I did not rightly understand what was going to happen. Then, from afar off, I saw them throw one end of the rope over a great branch of the *Bungor* tree, and having tied Panjang Biru's head-kerchief over his face, they fixed the other end round his neck. There was a moment's pause, and then Biru raised his head, and in a loud voice cried, three times, on the name of God: 'Allâh! Allâ-ah! Allâ-a-ah!' The last time exceeding loud and long drawn out, as though he were giving up the ghost with one supreme effort. There was a silence, and when next I looked I saw Panjang Biru's body swinging from the branch of the tree.

"If I had known that they really meant to hang him, I would have gone to his house and got him some food, for it was all ready there, and he might just as well have had it.

"We walked back to the boats, and, before we pushed off, some people came and asked whether they might cut the body down and bury it. The officers said they might have the body, and we returned to the camp."

“Had Panjang Biru done anything wrong?” I asked.

“Nothing, except that he gave shelter to Raja Abas. Every one knew that Raja Abas was a bad man, and I know that, while he lived here, Skola was always with him, and joined him in whatever he did; but there was nothing against Panjang Biru, and I don’t know why they hanged him. It was very hard not letting him have his breakfast, and I could have got it quite easily, if they had only let me.”

This set me thinking, and I remembered that, some days before this happened, while I was down-river, I received a letter asking me for the loan of a fast shallow-draught steam launch which was in my charge. I sent it, and in due time—after a week or ten days—it returned, bringing me a note to say that a force, sent up-river to disarm the village opposite “the *Bungor* tree,” had been attacked, and a certain number of officers and men had been killed and wounded. After reading the note, I went down to the boat, which was manned by a Malay cockswain, a man-of-war’s engine-room artificer, and a blue-jacket. I asked for particulars of the attack, and what had led to it. One of the white men replied, “What led to it? Why, a day or two before, they went up-river and hanged a man without ever judge or jury.”

At the time I had no means of ascertaining the facts. A thousand other things claimed my attention, and all I knew was that the village where these things occurred gave, for many years after, an infinity of trouble, and it was about as much as a man's life was worth to attempt an arrest there. If my informant's tale were true, that was not surprising; and there was no reason to doubt him, especially as he painted his own share in the proceedings in such hateful colours.

My curiosity was not quite satisfied; I had still a question to ask.

“What became of Raja Abas?”

“In the fighting which ensued between the villagers and the troops, Raja Abas joined the villagers, and they were very glad to have him, because he was so stout a fighter. Some years later he was killed.”

“How?”

“Well, as I told you, he was a bad man, with a very bad reputation, and I think he was concerned in some local murders. Anyhow, a famous holy man, who was also a great captain, undertook to bring him in, alive or dead. He did what I failed to do. He sent a man to join Raja Abas and make friends with him, and when the emissary had done

that, and gained the Raja's confidence, he sought a means of doing him to death. It was very difficult, even then, because, as I told you, Raja Abas was such a brave man, and they said he was invulnerable. Besides, he always carried that famous *keris*. However, one day he was crossing a stream by a log bridge, and the man who had undertaken the job walked behind him. When Raja Abas was in the middle of the log, the man took a good aim and shot him in the back, shot him from close behind, and the Raja fell into the stream. He was not invulnerable after all, for the charge made a great hole in his back. In spite of that, he climbed up the bank, and made for the man, who ran away, not daring to face him. Then the Raja sank down and died, and so the people found him."

I was glad it was dark. The moon had set, and I could see nothing but a reach of ghostly water glimmering through the mist. My curiosity had been gratified, and I must now pay the penalty; for whenever I stand here, and the sunlight streams over forest and river, I shall see that body, the face swathed in the kerchief, swinging from the violet-blossomed bough, and hear that last despairing cry to the God of Justice and Mercy.

## A SILHOUETTE

**A**MONGST Malays of the Peninsula, the most picturesque figure is that of the Famous Seyyid. He has come to see me, and as he stands in the semi-darkness of this lofty room, with its dead-white walls and the subdued light of a shaded lamp centred on him, I am almost led to question his reality. The stillness is so absolute, the shadows so deep, yet vague, while the outlines of face and form are so strong, the colours so rich and harmonious, that the man might be imagination materialised, the embodiment of an Eastern dream. That word explains the seeming unreality. Figure and surroundings of the East Eastern, the Famous Seyyid is the very type of a strange people ; the picture exactly in harmony with its frame.

Outside, an all but full moon rides high in a cloud-veiled sky. The clouds would be white, only that there is a haze which tinges all the light with blue. The country is very broken ; hill and vale, stretches



of jungle and undulating slopes of grass, with clumps of trees and isolated forest giants dotted about at uncertain intervals. In a long valley is a lake of shining water. But it is all vague, soft, and mysterious. The woods and the grass are grey with an underlying green, and the atmosphere is grey as well as blue. The water is a still and level surface of dark glass.

Through the wide-open doorways come visions of the moonlit country, and these white-framed pictures contrast strangely with the warm glow of the room and the fascinating figure of the Famous Seyyid.

He is a man of sixty-two; tall and straight, with a face so striking that it would attract attention anywhere. His forehead is wide and high, his dark eyes rather far apart, with drooping lids that it seems almost an effort to raise. His nose is aquiline and rather long, and his mouth is hidden by a long and heavy grey moustache. The jaw is massive and the chin square. The eyebrows black curved, and distinctly marked; while the hair is short and grey. He has a clear yellow complexion, and, in spite of his age, there is hardly a line on his face.

The drooping eyelids and hooked nose, the dark eyebrows, grey—almost white—moustache, with  
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ends curved upwards, and the massive jaw and chin, are very remarkable. The elaborately quiet manner of the man, the studied slowness of his ordinary movements, and his voice—so soft and low, it is an effort to catch his words—accentuate the strong features of his face and fascinate the spectator, as certain snakes are said to fascinate their victims. Only, with the Famous Seyyid, the eyes attract attention by the little there is to see of them.

His dress is scarcely less striking. A kerchief of some thin black material, stiffened with a jungle varnish which gives to the outer side a glossy surface, is tied into a fantastic yet becoming head-dress. The cloth is folded closely round the brow and over the scalp, but two of the corners, overlapping, stand up in a point, about ten inches high, on the left side of the head, and balance the thick fold of the kerchief which rests on the right ear. The cloth is hemmed with a chain stitch, in white, all round its edges, and these edges are made to show with great effect, especially in the upstanding corners. On the glossy side of this jet-black head-covering is painted, in gold leaf, a deep border of scroll-work, and dotted about, within the border, are conventional flowers, also in gold. The effect is novel, becoming, and striking in an unusual degree. Over a shirt of

soft, rich, yellow satin the Seyyid wears a jacket of Malay-red silk—dull of surface, but of strange rich colour—into which is woven a design which resembles small chariot wheels in gold thread. The jacket has an upright collar of the same material, is fastened by one gold button at the throat, and discloses a narrow gleam of the satin undershirt. The sleeves are tight at the wrist, slashed, and fastened by a long row of gold buttons. The costume is completed by trousers of dead-black silk, the lower eighteen inches interwoven with a quaint design in silver thread. The trousers are made almost tight round the ankles, while a gorgeous silk *sarong*, or skirt, hangs in graceful folds from the waist to the knees. The *sarong* itself is a thing of beauty, the finest work of the famed Trengganu looms. The prevailing colours are soft tones of cunningly-blended heliotrope and green, lined by faint gleams of gold thread; but a wide length of Malay-red, ablaze with gold, crosses the darker folds in flashes of splendour.

He is a man of war, this Seyyid, and was one of the most famous of the Malay fighting-chiefs in the days that are no more. The stories of his prowess, of his cunning, of his wickedness, are many, and strange, and ghastly. He has enemies, and it is

charitable to suppose that he has been maligned. There is no need to refer to such tales here. He has been a soldier of fortune, and he would be so again. He does not pretend to many virtues, or any accomplishments outside his profession as a captain of men.

When I see him, we talk of war—as it is understood in Malaya—and on that subject he can speak with experience. This evening is no exception to the rule, and he has related many curious experiences.

“It is very annoying,” he remarks at last; “you know what Malays are; and as I walk in the streets, men nudge each other and say, ‘That is the Famous Seyyid,’ and they huddle together like cowering curs, which always fall over each other in their anxiety to reach a safe place. Of course there is nothing to do now, and while the white men, the officers of Government, talk nicely to me, they are always suggesting that I should go away to some other country. I am old, and I have no desire to go elsewhere, and when the Government wanted help they found me useful. You know that, for we are old friends, and we have done the Government work together.”

I remind him that once, before those ancient days, he had, by his own statement to me, only waited for

a signal to fall upon a considerable party of Europeans, amongst whom my death was, perhaps, the one most keenly desired.

The Seyyid will not discuss such an unprofitable subject. He dismisses it with a reproachful glance, a little deprecatory movement of his hand, and the remark, "But the signal was never given!"

It was unkind to recall this incident, and possibly a trifle malicious, so I ask, "Is there some title you would like?"

"Ah, yes," he answers, "there is; but then, I must not forget my old friends in arms, the men who fought with me long ago. I would not have anything which rightly belongs to one of them."

The Seyyid recently passed the fasting month with the Sultan of Perak, who invited my attention to the fact that "his brother, the Seyyid," had become very devout, and never missed a prayer. This craving for holy things and the better life is a very encouraging sign; and the Famous Seyyid is, perhaps, not the first sinner who has turned to religion for excitement when he found the world slipping away from him. But in his case, at any rate, the old Adam is hardly scotched, for, the conversation having turned to his recent visit, he says: "I asked the Sultan of Perak whether he was friend

or foe to the State of Paiten, because I thought he could not care for the Raja of that place, and I offered to go and take it for him, if he wanted it."

"How did you mean to do it?" I ask.

"Oh!" he says, "I should go there with four or five people and make friends with the Paiten folk—fight cocks, and gamble with them, and play at anything they like—and all the time my people would be coming in, by twos and threes, and fours and fives, and working towards the Raja's place, where I should be. And when it was time——."

Then, for an instant, his drooping eyelids rise a fraction of an inch; he glances at me, and they fall again.

"*Měng-amok*?" I suggest.

He does not answer; but a very slow smile wanders round the corners of his mouth, and, as his face turns towards the ghostly pictures seen through the open doorways, it seems to be instinct with the vision of that sudden and furious night attack in far Paiten.

"It would not be difficult," I say; "but *Leng-gang*"—naming another State—"would be better worth having."

"Ah!" he answers, "I could not do that, it is a very populous country; but with quite a few men I

could take Paiten, and there would be some loot. You see I must think of that. I am a poor man, and if I could get some loot, I should like to go to Mecca."

"You have been writing while I have talked," says the Seyyid; "may I ask what you have written about?"

"I have been trying to make a silhouette of you."

"What is a silhouette?"

"Roughly speaking, it is a profile portrait, in black, on a white background."

"But where have you done this?"

"Here," I say, showing him the paper on which I am writing; "and you see, I have only used black and white."

"Ah!" he says, "I understand; it is the black and the white of *me*. Do not make it too black. A silhouette can only be true in outline."

"Very well," I reply; "I will put in the colours."

## FAULTY COMPOSITION

I N the volume entitled "Malay Sketches," published in 1895, I referred to the homicidal mania which drives men of the Malay race to a form of blind, reasonless murder, termed *amok* on account of the suddenness and fury with which the attack is delivered. Some interest has been aroused in the minds of readers, and inquiries have been made as to the cause of this special form of madness, if that is a term which can properly be applied to what seems to be a suddenly-awakened passion for indiscriminate slaughter.

I have collected some further particulars on the subject, and now offer them to the reader, who will, doubtless, draw his own conclusions.

Mr. John Crawford, a well-known writer on the Malay language, gave a lecture on Oriental words adopted in English, before the British Association at Birmingham, in the autumn of 1849, and in December of that year published a



paper from which I have taken the following verbatim extract:—

“(Muck, a-muck) Malay, amuk. The ‘a’ which precedes it in English is not the English indefinite article, but part of the word itself, and should be joined to it. There is no such word in Malay as muk, and still less the word written with a superfluous ‘c.’ Amuk (the ‘k’ at the end is mute) is the radical, and means a desperate and furious charge, or onset, either of an individual or body of men. From this we have such derivatives as the following—Mângamuk, to make a furious charge, or assault; Mângamukkân, to charge some object furiously; Bâramuk-amukan, to charge furiously and mutually; Pângamuk, one that makes a furious charge. When the English infantry charged with the bayonet at Waterloo, a Malay might with propriety say the English ran a-muck; when the French charged over the bridge of Lodi, he might say the same thing. Marshal Lannes would be considered by a Malay as an illustrious Pângamuk, and Sir Thomas Picton another. Dr. Johnson says he ‘knows not from what derivation is made to mean to run madly, and attack all we meet.’ He might, however, have discovered it, if he had read Dampier as carefully as Swift, who is said to have

made his style the model of some part of his Gulliver's Travels. The Rev. Mr. Todd, in his edition of the Dictionary, has a long explanation of small value, running over nearly a whole quarto column. His chief authority is Tavernier, whose account is full of mistakes. In one place he writes the word Mocca, and in another Moqua. He states the *kris*, with which the muck is run, to be poisoned, which I never heard to be the case. He says it is the Muhammadans, on their return from the pilgrimage to Mecca, who run a-muck; but the natives of the Eastern islands ran a-muck before they ever heard of the Muhammadan religion, and the unconverted natives at the present day equally run a-muck with the converted. The Rev. Mr. Pegg is next quoted by Mr. Todd out of the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' and Mr. Pegg charges the practice to excess in cock-fighting, and the loss of property, including wife and children. When this crisis arrives, the loser, according to Mr. Pegg, begins to chew a root, what is called bang, which the reverend gentleman takes to be the same thing as opium, and it is after that that he runs a-muck. This is all a fable, and the great probability is that no such case as that stated by the reverend gentleman ever occurred. The truth is, that running a-muck is the result of a sudden and

violent emotion, wholly unpremeditated. There is, therefore, no poisoning of daggers, no swallowing of opium, which instead of rousing would set the party asleep, and no eating of bang, which was unknown to the islanders at the time in which Mr. Pegg wrote. Moreover, bang and opium are not the same thing, for the first is the produce of the common hemp-plant, and the last of the white poppy. Finally, Mr. Todd quotes a note of Malone to the prose works of Dryden, in which he asserts that the word a-muck, written as one word, is an adverb, equivalent to 'killing,' which is even more wide of accuracy than the account of Mr. Pegg himself, and his other authority, Tavernier. Warton, in a note to Pope, repeats the same mistake about gaming, and smoking opium, before running a-muck. Sir Walter Scott's note in his edition of Dryden is little more than a repetition of Malone's. He speaks of the loss by gaming, of the intoxication with opium, and says that 'Amocco' means 'to kill.' 'He is, at last,' he says, 'cut down, or shot like a mad dog,' which is true. Of a very different character from the gossip of Tavernier and the rest, is the account given of the *amok* by Dr. Oxley in this journal. I had not the advantage of having perused it, when I read my paper at Birmingham, or I should have quoted its

intelligent and authentic statement at length. The *Amok* appears from it to be in many cases mere instances of monomania, taking this mischievous form, and, when they are not so, they are traced by the writer to the true character of the islanders. One fact stated in it I was not before aware of, that the *Amok* is most frequent among the Bugis. This is also the case in Java, but then it has been ascribed there to the ill-usage of this people in a state of slavery. I should conceive that of all the islanders, it would be found the least frequent among the Javanese. Instances of it did certainly occur during my six years' residence in that island, but they were by no means frequent. Amongst the Javanese of Singapore, it is probable that in thirty years no example has occurred. Dryden first made the word classic by using it in the third part of 'The Hind and Panther,' the application being to Bishop Burnet—

' Prompt to assail, and careless of defence  
 Invulnerable in his impudence,  
 He dares the world, and eager of a name  
 He thrusts about and jostles into fame,  
 Frontless, and satire-proof, he scours the streets  
 And runs an Indian muck at all he meets.'

“Pope followed him in the well-known lines, which are evidently an imitation :—

' Satire's my weapon, but I'm too discreet  
 To run a-muck and tilt at all I meet,  
 I only wear it in a land of Hectors,  
 Thieves, supercargoes, sharpeners, and directors.'

"The directors here referred to are those of the famous South-Sea Bubble, and the supercargoes probably the agents of the East India Company."

Dr. Oxley was a Government surgeon in Singapore, and the account to which Mr. Crawford referred was published in an official medical report on Singapore. Here it is:—

"The character of the unsophisticated Malay is remarkable for its simplicity and honesty. Having no artificial wants, they are satisfied and content with what would be considered positive destitution by a Chinese; they are consequently apathetic and inactive, and will not, for any amount offered to them, labour beyond their usual habits or customary routine; they have little, if any, speculative turn; they have a regard for truth, and may generally be depended upon in their statements. What has so often been written of their revengeful spirit is much exaggerated; polite in the extreme according to their own ideas, they never indulge in abuse one towards the other, the only reply to any deviation from this rule is the *kris*, for which they will watch

their opportunity, and most certainly not afford their adversary any advantage it is in their power to deprive him of. This is their code of honour, and being fully aware of it amongst themselves, provocation is seldom given, and satisfaction as seldom required. When goaded, however, to the necessity, they become perfectly reckless, and should discovery attend the deed, they attempt no refutation, but sell their lives at the utmost cost they can to the captors. Too often have I known the officers of police compelled to shoot them on these occasions. Such is one species of *Amok*; and how offenders of this description are to be dealt with, can admit of but little doubt; but there is another variety of the 'Orang Beramok' vastly different, and by no means the least frequent, which requires discrimination on the part of the medical jurist, to prevent irresponsible persons suffering the penalty of the injured law. For instance, a man sitting quietly amongst his friends and relatives will, without provocation, suddenly start up, weapon in hand, and slay all within his reach. I have known so many as eight killed and wounded by a very feeble individual in this manner. Next day, when interrogated whether he was not sorry for the act he had committed, no one could be more contrite. When asked, 'Why, then,

did you do it?' the answer has invariably been, 'The devil entered into me; my eyes were darkened, I did not know what I was about.' I have received this same reply on at least twenty different occasions. On examination of these monomaniacs, I have generally found them labouring under some gastric disease or troublesome ulcer, and these fearful ebullitions break out upon some exacerbation of the disorder. Those about them have generally told me that they appeared moping and melancholy a few days before the outbreak. It is certainly much to be deplored that monomania amongst the Malays almost invariably takes this terrible form. The Bugis, whether from revenge or disease, are by far the most addicted to the *âmok*. I should think three-fourths of all the cases I have seen have been by persons of this nation."

Both these gentlemen were by their experience entitled to speak on this subject, and so far as I can see, there is little to criticise in their statements. The Bugis (that is the name by which the natives of the Celebes are known) are no doubt prone to the habit of *měng-âmok*, and I should have said that the Javanese are as likely to give way to it as the Malays of the Peninsula. Both the Bugis and the Javanese are of a more sombre, brooding, and revengeful tem-

perament than the Malays. On the 8th July 1846, Sunan, a respectable Malay house-builder in Penang, ran *âmok* in the heart of the town, and "before he was arrested, killed an old Hindu woman, a Kling, a Chinese boy, and a Kling girl about three years old, in the arms of its father, and wounded two Hindus, three Klings, and two Chinese, of whom only two survived. On his trial it appeared that he was greatly afflicted by the recent loss of his wife and child, which preyed upon his mind, and quite altered his appearance. A person with whom he had lived up to the 15th of June said further, 'He used to bring his child to his work; since its death he has worked for me. He often said he could not work, as he was afflicted by the loss of his child. I think he was out of his mind; he did not smoke or drink—I think he was mad.' On the morning of the *âmok* this person met him, and asked him to work at his boat. 'He replied that he could not, he was very much afflicted.' 'He had his hands concealed under his cloth; he frequently exclaimed, Allah! Allah!' 'He daily complained of the loss of his wife and child.' On the trial Sunan declared he did not know what he was about, and persisted in this at the place of execution, adding, 'As the gentlemen say I have committed so many murders, I suppose it must be so.'



The *ámok* took place on the 8th, the trial on the 13th, and the execution on the 15th July—all within eight days."

The murderer was tried before the Recorder of Pinang, Sir William Norris, and in passing sentence on the prisoner, the judge made these remarks:—

"Sunan, you stand convicted on the clearest evidence of the wilful murder of Pakir Sah on Wednesday last, and it appears that on the same occasion you stabbed no less than ten other unfortunate persons, only two of whom are at present surviving. It now becomes my duty to pass upon you the last sentence of the law. I can scarcely call it a painful duty, for the blood of your innocent victims cries aloud for vengeance, and both justice and humanity would be shocked were you permitted to escape the infamy of a public execution. God Almighty alone, the great 'searcher of hearts,' can tell precisely what passed in that wretched heart of yours before and at the time when you committed these atrocious deeds; nor is it necessary for the ends of justice that we should perfectly comprehend the morbid views and turbulent passions by which you must have been actuated. It is enough for us to know that you, like all other murderers, 'had not the fear of God before your eyes,' and that you acted of 'malice aforethought

and by the instigation of the devil' himself, who was 'a murderer from the beginning.' But all the atrocities you have committed are of a peculiar character, and such as are never perpetrated by Christians, Hindoos, Chinese, or any other class than Muhammadans, especially Malays, among whom they are frightfully common, and may therefore be justly branded by way of infamous distinction as Muhammadan murders. I think it right, therefore, seeing so great a concourse of Muhammadans in and about the Court, to take this opportunity of endeavouring to disabuse their minds and your own of any false notions of courage, heroism, or self-devotion which Muhammadans possibly, but Muhammadans alone of all mankind, can ever attach to such base, cowardly, and brutal murders; notions which none but the devil himself, 'the father of lies,' could ever have inspired. But if such false, execrable, and dangerous delusions really are entertained by any man or body of men whatever, it may be as well to show from the gloomy workings of your mind, so far as circumstances have revealed them, that not a particle of manly courage or heroism could have animated you, or can ever animate any man who lifts his cowardly hand against helpless women and children. You had lately, it seems, been greatly afflicted by

the sudden deaths of your wife and only child, and God forbid that I should needlessly harrow up your feelings by reverting to the subject. I do so merely because it serves in some degree to explain the dreadful tragedy for which you are now about to answer with your life. Unable or unwilling to submit with patience to the affliction with which it had pleased God to visit you, you abandoned yourself to discontent and despair, until shortly before the bloody transaction, when you went to the mosque *to pray!!*—to pray to whom, or to what? Not to senseless idols of wood or stone—which Christians and Muhammadans equally abominate—but to the one omniscient, almighty, and all-merciful God, in whom alone Christians and Muhammadans profess to believe! But in what spirit did you pray, if you prayed at all? Did you pray for resignation, or ability to ‘humble yourself under the mighty hand of God’? Impossible. You may have gone to curse in your heart and gnash with your teeth, but certainly not to pray, whatever unmeaning sentences of the Koran may have issued from your lips. Doubtless you entered the mosque with a heart full of haughty pride, anger, and rebellion against your Maker, and no wonder that you sallied forth again overflowing with hatred and malice against your innocent fellow-

creatures ; no wonder that, when thus abandoned to the devil, you stabbed with equal cruelty, cowardice, and ferocity unarmed and helpless men, women, and children, who had never injured, never known, probably never seen you before.

“Such are the murders which Muhammadans alone have been found capable of committing. Not that I mean to brand Muhammadans in general as worse than all other men, far from it ; I believe there are many good men among them—as good as men can be who are ignorant of the only true religion. I merely state the fact that such atrocities disgrace no other creed, let the Muhammadans account for the fact as they may. But whatever may be the true explanation—whether these fiendish excesses are the result of fanaticism, superstition, over-weening pride, or ungovernable rage, or, which is probable, of all combined, public justice demands that the perpetrators should be visited with the severest and most disgraceful punishment which the law can inflict.

“The sentence of the Court therefore is, that you, Sunan, be remanded to the place from whence you came, and that on the morning of Wednesday next you be drawn from thence on a hurdle to the place of execution, and there hanged by the neck until you are dead. Your body will then be handed over to

the surgeons for dissection, and your mangled limbs, instead of being restored to your friends for decent interment, will be cast into the sea, thrown into a ditch, or scattered on the earth at the discretion of the sheriff. And may God Almighty have mercy on your miserable soul!"

That judgment was delivered more than half a century ago; but it is consoling to think that it drew a dignified protest from Mr. James Richardson Logan, a distinguished ethnologist and writer, who knew the people of the Archipelago better than any one of his time. Mr. Logan urged the Government to suppress the piracy then rampant in Malay waters, to organise a strong police force and afford real protection to its subjects, and then to deprive the Malays of the weapons they were obliged to carry for their own defence. He also appealed to all intelligent people to publish the results of their observations on the tendency of Malays to *měng-âmok*, which he described as a "deeply interesting subject." For himself he wrote:—

"These *âmoks* result from an idiosyncrasy or peculiar temperament common amongst Malays, a temperament which all who have had much intercourse with them must have observed, although they cannot account for or thoroughly understand. It

consists in a proneness to chronic disease of feeling, resulting from a want of moral elasticity, which leaves the mind a prey to the pain of grief, until it is filled with a malignant gloom and despair, and the whole horizon of existence is overcast with blackness. If the reader thinks we have sketched the progress of a monomania, we answer that the great majority of *pěng-ámoks* are monomaniacs. Whatever name we give the mental condition in which they are, and whatever our views of their responsibility for their acts, it is clear that such a condition of mind is inconsistent with a regard for consequences. The pleasures of life have no attractions, and its pains no dread, for a man reduced to the gloomy despair and inward rage of the *pengamo'*. A government cannot medicine a mind diseased, but it can confine the evil to the sufferer himself. The Malay, compelled from boyhood to trust to his *kris* for the protection of his person and his honour, considers it as a part of his existence. A state of society which requires every individual to be ready at any time to use his *kris* is quite inconsistent with a horror of shedding blood."

The Malays have been disarmed; but if that be a preventive of the disease, it certainly is not a cure. Nothing is easier than to obtain a weapon of some

sort, whenever it is really wanted, and as many murders are committed, in this part of the world, with a chopping-knife as with anything else. Only the other day I read, in a local newspaper, the following account of an *âmok* in Perak. It is as bad a case as can well be imagined:—

“Particulars of the Bhota *âmok* case are just to hand, and, as will be seen, they are very gruesome. We are sorry to say the murderer still remains at large, but this is not due to any want of endeavour on the part of the police to capture him. District Inspector McKeon, of Kuala Kangsar, has relieved Mr. Conway in the hunt for this murderous brute, and we hope soon to hear of his capture, if he is not shot down like a dog, as he deserves to be. The man’s name is Ngah Gafur, and he is between thirty-five and forty years old. He had not been living on good terms with his wife for a year past, and the latter, we believe, had been contemplating a divorce. This news, apparently, has caused the man to go off his head, and commit the horrible butchery of his own flesh and blood. It appears on the afternoon of the 14th instant he left his house, where he has been living by himself, and went to his mother-in-law’s, whence he removed his two children, both boys, aged seven and four, and took them to the

house occupied by his wife close by. There a dispute took place between the husband and wife as to the future custody of the poor things, and it ended in the man seizing hold of one after another and cutting them down most ruthlessly; he then went for his wife, and, before the unfortunate creature could realise what had happened, 'despatched her after her children. The mother-in-law, who ran up to the assistance of her daughter, however, escaped with a deep cut on her shoulder; whilst the grandmother-in-law, a poor ancient dame, who heedlessly rushed shrieking to the scene, as fast as her tottering legs could convey her, was silenced for ever with two deep gashes on her neck. The blood he had already shed appears to have given the *Amoker* only zest to spill more, and his next victim was his unhappy sister-in-law, a young girl of about nine years or so. Having thus disposed of his relations, he returned to his neighbours, attacking a poor lone woman, and fatally stabbing her with a spear, he inflicted no less than six wounds on different parts of the body of this woman. He then proceeded towards Tronok, and at about a mile and a half from the scene of his first murders, and close to the Tronok footpath, he came upon an old man, who had taken up his residence in a solitary hut in the



jungle, to gather the produce of a few durian trees he owned there, and murdered him by stabbing him in the back, and he then burnt down the hut. He also set fire to the house in which his wife was living. Gafur then, as reported in our last issue, took to the wilds, and has, as stated above, so far eluded a party of the police, at first headed by the Assistant-Commissioner and Inspector Conway, and now under charge of Mr. McKeon. He has, however, since burnt down two more houses, and severely wounded one of the Dyak constables now scouring the country for him. One of these asserts he had a passing sight of him at about five hundred yards, and this proves that the police are gaining upon him, and that he will soon be cornered."

My friend the Sultan of Perak has recently suggested the most intelligent explanation of the *Amok* that I have yet heard. His Highness points out that Malays have never been accustomed to take any particular notice of people mentally affected, unless they became so violent, or so indecent in their conduct, that it was necessary to confine them. Then they were usually shut up in some isolated hut, where food was passed in to them, and they were left there till death put an end to their miserable existences. Such cases were extremely rare,

even in the days of Malay government. But there must be, in any Malay State, a certain number of people who, if they were carefully watched and examined by capable medical men, would no doubt be accounted lunatics and put under restraint. The Sultan expresses his belief that the *âmo*k runners invariably come from this class, that they are afflicted with melancholia, and suddenly develop homicidal tendencies; and that, in any western country, their symptoms would have induced their relatives to put them under professional control for their own and the public safety.

Knowing the reluctance of Malays to consult European medical men, to submit themselves to European treatment, or follow any prescribed régime, it is hardly surprising that they say as little as possible about cases of suspected mania, where those afflicted are their own relatives. It is, therefore, easy to understand that if a Malay shows signs of mental derangement, and the relatives realise their meaning, if there is also a family history pointing to hereditary insanity, it is extremely unlikely that anything will be said or done to lead to an inquiry by any European. The disease, therefore, has time to develop until, on a day, some straw turns the scale, and a madman, armed, irresponsible,

reckless, and hungry to kill, is let loose on the community.

In support of this theory it would be possible to cite a great many cases. I will only take one, which occurred in Perak last year, and I quote it because no one was killed—the man who made the attack not losing entire control over himself—and because some evidence was given by the parents of the *pěng-âmok*, which would not have been available had they been done to death. Briefly, a grown-up son, living with his parents, had a dispute with his father about a matter of no great importance, and went into another room. The mother and a grandchild ran out of the house. Shortly after, the son returned, and, without the slightest warning, struck his father three severe blows on the head, neck, and shoulder, with a small chopper. Then, leaving the old man lying in his blood, the son went to a police station close by and complained that his father had taken his money and he had struck him. When it was suggested that the father might be dead, the son said, "Perhaps he is ; I don't know."

At the trial the father said, in cross-examination : "The prisoner has been subject at times to fits of talking nonsense, when the moon is increasing to the full. These fits have not been so frequent of

late, but he had one about eight days before he attacked me. When he is seized with one of these fits, he will declare, while eating his rice, that he has no rice. He will also say that the house we are living in is his own, and that he will not allow any one but himself to live in it. He has never been in this frame of mind for more than one day in one month. Two days before he attacked me, he told me that I had over a hundred dollars of his in my possession, and that I had better leave the house. When he said this, I supposed it to be the result of unsoundness of mind, *and paid no attention to it.* I have no money of his in my possession."

In reply to the prisoner, his father said, "Yes, it is a fact that I and my wife and a man, about three years ago, tied you up and put you in stocks for about a month." And to the Court, "We put him in stocks because we were afraid he was going mad; we gave him medicine. . . . The prisoner has not been under any restraint since he was put in the stocks three or four years ago." The mother, after describing the quarrel, and how she and her grandchild ran out of the house in their fear, stated that she saw the attack, and called for help, when the prisoner at once ran away. She said she was frightened, because she heard the prisoner talking

to himself in another room, and, in reply to the Court, continued, "I remember that three or four years ago the prisoner was put in the stocks by his father and a friend, who said that he was deranged, and undertook to give him medicine. . . . The prisoner has often abused me and his father before. He has struck and pushed me. He generally behaves like that once when the moon is increasing to the full, and once when it is on the wane."

In his judgment, delivered in 1846, Sir William Norris described the *âmok* as "frightfully common" amongst Malays, and no doubt he referred to the only Malays he knew, those in the Straits Settlements. For many years such attacks have been exceedingly rare there; perhaps not more than three real cases in the last fifteen years. The Malay population has increased year by year, and yet, from being "frightfully common" fifty years ago (a statement which is certainly supported by Mr. Crawford and Mr. Logan), the *âmok* in the colony has almost ceased. A simple explanation is that, with hospitals, lunatic asylums, and a certain familiarity with European methods of treatment, the signs of insanity are better understood, and those who show them are put under restraint before they do serious damage.

If the asylums of Europe and America were closed,

and the inmates returned to their relatives, it is more than probable that cases of what the Malay calls *âmok*, would not be confined to natives of the Peninsula and the islands of the Archipelago.

It will naturally be asked why men in other eastern countries—in China and Japan, for instance—do not *měng-âmok* under the influence of mania or passion. I think the answer is that the people are of a different temperament from the Malays, and the *âmok* is an ancient practice in Malaya. The Japanese have their own peculiar method of suicide, and the Chinese, seeking death as a means to reincarnation, travel by the shortest road, without wasting time to slaughter by the way.

For myself, if I venture to offer an opinion, it is simply the result of observation and inquiry. I believe that about sixty per cent. of the Malays who *měng-âmok* are mentally diseased, usually from inherited causes. Of the rest, what happens is this: some serious trouble overtakes a man, serious to him that is. He is insulted by a man, jealous of, scorned or rejected by, a woman—and the times are out of joint. He broods over his trouble and says, "I shan't be able to put up with this, I must *měng-âmok*."

This course suggests itself because it is the fashion,

because he knows that when Malays are hard hit, as he is, this is what they do. He thinks this is the only dignified way of getting out of his trouble, the only course sanctioned by ancient custom. There will be a good deal of talk about him and his deeds, and, if he does something very desperate, there will be the approval of the boastful swaggerers, who will speak of him with respect.

Therefore he hugs his real, or fancied, wrong, till the idea of *měng-āmok* becomes *une idée fixe*, dominating his mind to the exclusion of all other things, and the slightest incident is seized upon as his cue to rush upon the stage and begin the acting of a part he has so often rehearsed. The first step once taken, the man loses control over himself, and possessed (by the devil, according to Sir W. Norris) by his resolve, he "sees red," and blindly continues his course, attacking friends and foes, old and young alike. Whatever his family history, the man is, at this stage, a homicidal maniac, dealing death and seeking it. In this country he is regarded as an unusually dangerous beast, and his fellows so treat him. As a rule he is not taken alive; but wounded, half-starved, exhausted after a long chase, the fit may, to some extent, wear itself out, and the police may then effect a capture.

If Dryden was the first to make classic his own rendering of the Malay word *âmok*, he is perhaps responsible for a host of imitators, the latest of whom I may be pardoned for quoting. This unique address is stated (but I cannot say on what authority) to have been recently delivered by an Indian pleader in the court of a magistrate at Barisal. It is a veritable case of *âmok*—on the English language:—

“My learned friend with mere wind from a teapot thinks to browbeat me from my legs. But this is mere gorilla warfare. I stand under the shoes of my client, and only seek to place my bone of contention clearly in your Honour’s eye. My learned friend vainly runs amuck upon the sheet-anchors of my case. Your Honour will be pleased enough to observe that my client is a widow—a poor chap with one post-mortem son. A widow of this country, your Honour will be pleased enough to observe, is not like a widow of your Honour’s country. A widow of this country is not able to eat more than one meal a day, or to wear clean clothes, or to look after a man. So my poor client has not such physic or mind as to be able to assault the lusty complainant. Yet she has been deprived of some of her more valuable leather—the leather of her nose. My learned friend has thrown only an argument *ad hominy* upon my teeth that my



client's witnesses are all her own relations. But they are not near relations. Their relationship is only homœopathic. So the misty arguments of my learned friend will not hold water. At least they will not hold good water. Then my learned friend has said that there is on the side of his client a respectable witness—namely, a pleader, and, since this witness is independent, so he should be believed. But your Honour, with your Honour's vast experience, is pleased enough to observe that truthfulness is not so plentiful as blackberries in this country. And I am sorry to say, though this witness is a man of my own feathers, that there are in my profession black sheep of every complexion, and some of them do not always speak Gospel truth. Until the witness explains what have become of my client's nose-leather he cannot be believed. He cannot be allowed to raise a castle in the air by beating upon a bush. So, trusting in that administration of British justice on which the sun never sits, I close my case."

## LOCAL COLOUR

I TRUST no reader will suppose that, because I have sketched the Malay in some of his darker moods, it would be fair to him to imagine that he is always, or even commonly, killing or trying to kill. There was a time, not many years ago, when the Malay Peninsula was a sealed book to white men. The whole country was divided into eight or ten States, and each State was despotically governed by one man—sultan, raja, or chief, as the case might be. Under this hereditary ruler there were always a number of more or less powerful chiefs, who nominally held their offices from the head of the State; but each of whom did pretty much as he pleased so long as he professed allegiance to the ruler, did not interfere with him or his relatives, and gave to him some small portion of the taxes squeezed from Malay *raiyats* and Chinese miners and traders. This condition of affairs was due to a variety of reasons, amongst the principal of which may be instanced

the absence of roads and the immense difficulties of communication ; the jealousies and rivalries of different aspirants to the supreme authority ; and the consequent failure of any individual to make his power recognised throughout the State. Want of funds, constitutional dilatoriness and weakness, and the traditions of centuries of misrule, were also contributory causes.

It was this burden of many masters, and no fountain of justice or appeal, which made the lives of the poor so unbearable, that in many places the Malay population was dwindling at a rate to ensure the early extinction of the race. Under such conditions, it is not altogether surprising that the resources of the country were neglected ; that strangers declined to trust their persons and property to such unreliable hosts ; that the exceeding bitter cry of serfdom and slavery fell on deaf ears ; and that, in a society where might was right, each man consulted his own inclinations, and those only, caring little by what means he achieved his end, so long as the end was gained.

A well-nigh perpetual state of strife was the result. And, though it never reached more than insignificant proportions, it was enough, with constant visitations of pestilence, with the want entailed

by uncultivated fields, the dearth of money and the absence of all paid labour, to decimate the people and drive the poor remnant of them into the train of the nearest chief, to rob or murder at his dictation, or under his protection.

That was the despotism of the individual; not so much of the ruler as of each little district chief, each village head-man; while every sprig of nobility with more ambition than means, every free-lance with a stout heart, a good weapon, and a little reckless enterprise, wandered about the country seeking adventures, and making the most helpless pay for his amusement.

Then came British intervention, and an entirely new order of things. The idea of government became a reality. Slavery, debt-bondage, and forced labour were abolished. One central authority, and one only, was recognised. Powers of life and death, and punishment in all its forms, were reserved for the ruler and those acting in his name. Every complaint was heard, Courts of Justice (though perhaps not of law) were instituted throughout the land, and their doors were open to rich or poor, to *raiyyat* or to raja, without respect of persons. Roads, railways, and telegraphs were constructed in every direction, and—greatest innovation of all—*the land*

*was made the absolute property of those who cultivated it.* Work was plentiful, wages high, and the labourers few; so all classes became rich, as the resources of the country were exploited by Chinese and other immigrants, who now flocked into the States. Hospitals were built, the sick attended, sanitation insisted upon, and epidemics of cholera and smallpox—the scourge and terror of the country—disappeared as by magic. The long-abandoned fields were cultivated, and plentiful harvests added to the comfort and prosperity of the labouring classes, who saw their children educated in Government schools, where reading, writing, and a simple course of figures, all taught in Malay, were supplemented by the study of the Koran. The man who used to walk about with three daggers in his belt, two spears in his left hand, a sword under his right arm, and a gun over his shoulder, now goes into the jungle with only a chopping-knife; and the boy of tender years has given up his array of miniature weapons for a slate and a bundle of books.

“The old order changeth,” and, in the case of the Malay, the change amounts to something like regeneration. But the miracles that have been wrought are all evident to eye and ear. The increase of comfort, the better houses, better clothes,

the cultivated fields and cared-for orchards—signs of freedom, prosperity, and safety—these are but the reflection of administrative progress; of roads, railways, canals, and waterworks; of solid and even handsome public buildings, populous well-ordered towns, and beautiful parks and gardens. ( The outward signs of the people's life have changed, as the face of the country has changed and is changing; but at heart the Malay man and the Malay woman are very much what they were. Circumstances have provided prisons and punishment for the wicked; peace, safety, freedom, and opportunities of culture and expansion for the immense majority, whose instincts are patriotic and self-respecting, courageous, generous, homely, and compassionate, if they cannot fairly be called noble or deeply religious, strictly upright or more than moderately moral, according to Western standards of morality.

It is difficult to imagine any state of human existence more typical of perfect peace, of idyllic simplicity, of warmth and colour, and the plenty bestowed by a superabundantly-fruitful Nature, than that presented by a Malay riverine hamlet, when the observer has time and inclination to note the details of the picture. It is painted by nature, true to life, in perfect proportion, full of atmosphere, of light

and shade, of striking realities and subtle suggestions; and it satisfies the artistic sense in a way that seems peculiar to many phases of Eastern scenery.

Any very beautiful sight almost instantly raises a wish, in the heart of the beholder, that his joy should be shared by those he loves, by those to whom such a scene would appeal as it does to him. If he can dabble in colours, or feebly outline a word picture, he very probably tries to put on canvas, or paper, some semblance of the beauty which has so stirred his feelings. In either case the result can be little more than a caricature of what he saw. If the knowledge of certain failure to conjure up the very scene is to deter him, then there is an end of all effort; for no brush, no pen, can reproduce nature, and yet either may, in even indifferent hands, catch a faint semblance of the reality, and give, sometimes pleasure, sometimes a grain of instruction. The fact that the comparative exactness of a photograph often conveys a poorer idea of a scene than a very indifferently-painted sketch, gives encouragement, and some justification, to an accurate and truth-loving observer, who honestly tries, with however little success, to share his pleasant experiences with those who may never

have the opportunity of seeing with their own eyes what he has seen.

I question whether it is any more possible to exactly portray a real character than it is to describe a scene; and the reason why we tire after a page of the latter, but can wade through volumes of the former, however unnatural or impossible, is because our interest in the human being is immeasurably greater than our interest in scenery. That is curious, in a way; because, when we seek our own pleasure, it is far more commonly to view a new land, a great building, a marvellous work of art, than in the expectation, or even with the desire, of meeting an interesting individuality. We like to read about individuals who are so cleverly drawn that they awaken our interest; but when we seek them in life, we have to go through a good deal of painful labour for each successful quest. And then we cannot throw the tiresome experiences across the room, directly we realise that we are wasting time and temper with a disappointment of our own seeking.

Character has, however, one great attraction, as compared with the visible beauties of nature and art; it is hidden from sight. Moreover, the more complex the character, the more difficult it is to discover in all its workings, the more absorbing the



study. Uncertainty always attracts, and experienced intelligence knows that certainty, in regard to the character of another, is a very difficult end to attain; while the fact that traits have been revealed to us (to our insight or for love of us) that are hidden from the many, is very soothing to our self-esteem.

It is often said that a European cannot understand the character of an Eastern, or follow the curious workings of his brain. I doubt whether the Eastern is any more difficult to understand than the Western, when once you have taken the trouble to study him, as you would prepare yourself for the consideration of any other subject of which you did not know the rudiments. One who is the outcome of Western civilisation and Christian teaching, could hardly expect to understand the peculiarities of an Eastern character, the product of generations of Muhammadan or Hindu ancestors. But if you live in the East for years—if you make yourself perfectly familiar with the language, literature, customs, prejudices, and superstitions of the people; if you lie on the same floor with them, eat out of the same dish with them, fight with them and against them, join them in their sorrows and their joys, and, at last, win their confidence and regard—then the reading of their characters is no longer an impos-

sible task, and you will find that between one Eastern and another there is a much greater similarity than there is between two Westerns, even though they be of the same nationality. There are good and bad, energetic and lazy, but you will hardly ever meet those complex products of Western civilisation whose characters are subordinated to the state of their nerves, and those to the season of the year, the surroundings of the moment, politics, the money market, and a thousand things of which the Eastern is blissfully unconscious. His mind follows one bent, as his scenery—beautiful, and strange, and novel though it is to us—follows one type, repeating itself throughout the whole of a vast area; so that, when the features of the country change, the features of the people, their language, manners, religion, and even their colour, will probably undergo as great a change.

I am only dealing here with a very small and very remote corner of a hemisphere, but, to illustrate my meaning, I will try to smudge in a tiny bit of local colour, just as I saw it.

A Malay will always choose the bank of a navigable stream for his dwelling, if he can. Round his house he plants the palms and fruit trees which give shade, and food, and profit. The river is the

road on which he drives his boat, and it also supplies him with all that he drinks, with his bath, with sport, and the fish that reward his skill. From Malay life it may be said that woman is never absent; and in the conversation of Malays, perhaps the chief characteristic is the fashion of speaking in parables, by innuendo, by the use of *doubles entendres* and apparently meaningless suggestions, which are as well understood by those for whom they are intended as our plainer and more direct forms of speech. This practice imparts to conversation a zest and flavour as in some game where there is a pleasurable sensation of risk, and a stimulating challenge to the exercise of wit, intelligence, ready comprehension and apt reply.

Now this is what I saw and heard as I stood in a grove of coco-nuts on the bank of a great Malay river. It was late afternoon, and the sun was casting shafts of hot light between the palms, across the fern-carpeted ground, through the feathery fronds of bamboos swaying gently on the river's bank, out among the dancing ripples of the stream. Under the trees was gathered a little group of men and women. Dark, olive-skinned natives of the country, clad in soft-toned silks; the women wearing, besides their skirts and jackets, gossamer veils, studded and

edged with gold embroidery—not veils to hide the face, only to frame it in a tenderly-artful setting, whence the dark-lashed, dewy eyes might stir the beholder's blood more easily.

Some naked children laughed and played within the shallows of the crooning stream; fought in the shallows and fell into the silent pools of deeper water, shadowed by branches hidden from the sun.

The picture caught my eye and held me dreamily delighted.

Then a voice spoke, and it said this—only not this—this in an Eastern tongue—

“Strange that the nut should seem so fair, so full of all that's good, and yet the squirrel's gnawed a hole right through the shell and left it empty!”

I turned and saw a man, his head thrown back, gazing upwards towards a bunch of nuts in the top of a lofty tree. At least so it seemed, but I realised that, though his face was set that way, his eyes looked inward, and on his lips was a scarcely-perceptible sneer—the shadow of that inner sight.

Beyond his face I saw another—that of a girl, young and comely, and on it was written death—death to be dealt out sudden and sure—and her eyes, for that instant, fell straight on the face of the speaker. Then I understood.

## A MEZZOTINT

AFTER many years' intimate acquaintance with Malays of all classes, I have come to the conclusion that the scheme of a Malay woman's existence is so ordered that, while the sordid element is usually there, the romantic not seldom, and the tragic, perhaps oftener than among Western people, it would still be difficult to set down, in black and white, the life-story of any typical Malay woman and invest the telling with interest to a Western reader. (The reason is that the Malay, like all Eastern women, lives a life apart. As a girl she mixes only with those of her own family, and, if she ever sees men, it is practically never to speak to them. Her intercourse with other girls is very limited, and older women treat her as a child until she marries. Her intellectual education is so slight that one can only be surprised at the quite uncommon intelligence shown by many of the better class, when once they have attained the position which

allows them to be seen and heard. The Malay passes straight from childhood to womanhood; for her there is practically no girlhood. In the choice of a husband she has no part, and may never have seen her suitor till he comes in the character of a bridegroom, to claim his affianced bride.

From our point of view, the traditions of her country, the prejudices of her society, are very much against her; but the Malay woman has feminine instincts, qualities, and characteristics which do not greatly differ from those common to others of her sex more happily circumstanced. Only she has very few opportunities of indulging in aspirations, and she knows practically nothing of the "Rights of Woman." To her, those rights are precisely limited by the power and influence which she can exercise over men, by reason of her personal attractions, her superior intelligence, or the possession of wealth.

Ages of custom, and generations of law-giving, cannot stifle natural impulses, though they may control or punish their indulgence. It follows, therefore, that, if the romance of girlhood is denied to the Malay woman, the craving for adoration, for the exercise of some freedom of choice, even the

desire to awaken affection in others, to gratify curiosity, or measure the power of physical attractions, will find opportunities for indulgence at a later period of life. Here again the field of adventure is narrowed, by the ease with which divorce is secured and re-marriage contracted. Still, passions run high among a people living within shout of the equator, and Malays are so constituted that neither custom, nor law, nor the power of easy arrangement suffice to prevent them giving way to some measure of passionate madness, of blind stupidity, or of criminal wickedness, in their social relations. That is perhaps the more strange as there is no Malayan Mrs. Grundy, and society never turns its back on any man, or any woman, no matter how heinous their offences in this regard. If morality is a question of latitude, one form of it is, by Western standards, decidedly lax throughout a good many degrees north and south of the equator.

So far I have referred only to the women—gentle and simple—of Malay society; where there is no admixture, or any but the most ceremonial intercourse with Europeans, or with the people of any other nationality. The stories of such lives would, I repeat, make but dull reading for foreigners. There will be occasional exceptions, tragic or pathetic

tales, which only reach the ears of Malays, or of those few sympathetic and trusted Europeans from whom nothing is hidden. Even in these cases, the bare facts would supply a foundation so slender that, to make it support a respectable edifice, the builder would have to add materials which would destroy the character of the structure. Malays build with bamboo and palm-leaves, at best with wood and thatch, and, in a way, the dwellings formed of these flimsy materials are typical of the inconsequent lives of those who inhabit them.

From what I have said, it might be thought that a little education, a little emancipation, is what the Malay woman chiefly needs. I doubt it. That form of experiment, though full of interest to the operator, is sometimes fatal to the patient. A little learning is not so dangerous as to plant the seeds of aspirations which can never grow to maturity. It is easy for the teacher to make a child entirely dissatisfied with all its old surroundings, to fill it with a determination to have something better than the old life, or to have nothing at all. But, when the time comes to satisfy the cultivated taste of the educated mind, the teacher is powerless to help, is probably far out of reach, and the lonely soul of the misdirected girl will find little comfort in her old



home and the society of her own unregenerate people.

I have been drawn into these serious considerations by the recollection of certain disjointed confidences made to me, by one Edward Cathcart, of whom I have something to say before I repeat his story.

When I first met Cathcart, he was about one-and-twenty ; tall, dark, well made, lithe, and strong. He was the son of a noted Indian civilian, but both his parents were dead, and he had been brought up by an indulgent aunt. The boy had been educated at a great public school, where he had distinguished himself as much by his intellectual gifts as by his pre-eminence in all athletic sports. Unlike most English boys, he was extremely musical, knew by heart the works of many of the great composers, most of the popular music of the day, and could play by ear almost anything he heard. Besides this, he had a manner of such charm that his popularity, especially with men, was quite extraordinary ; and more than once I have known men quarrel because they thought he showed a preference for one or other in the circle of his nearest friends.

On the other hand, partly by character, and partly, I think, by reason of the fact that he hardly remem-

bered either father or mother, he was self-willed and self-indulgent, careless of his own interests and thoughtless of those of others. The charm of his manner and the fascination of his many gifts had, doubtless, made those who surrounded him indulge him as a boy and try to spoil him as a man. For all that, there was nothing to show that he had been affected by a worship that might easily have turned a weaker head.

Cathcart left England, went eastward, and sought a career in Malaya. There his ability at once attracted attention, and his manner, his address (for he was even then a man of the world), made him a host of friends. A born linguist, he had no difficulty in learning the language of the country, and everything seemed to promise him a brilliant future.

For the rest, I can only try to repeat what he told me. The story is vague and fragmentary, the incidents few and of doubtful interest; but I must leave them to speak for themselves. If I tried to make a finished picture of what he left with me, I should only mar the outlines. The paper is too old, the colours are too faded, to permit of any successful redaubing now.

When Cathcart made his first acquaintance with the East, there dwelt in one of the Malay States a

chief of Arab blood, not, perhaps, wholly unmixed with Malay, but still pure enough to distinguish him from the people of the land. He had married a woman of his own class, but in her case the Malay character and features were predominant. In all the Malay States these so-called Arab families are to be found, sprung originally from some wandering Seyyid, who, recently or remotely, had visited Malaya and taken a wife from the best of the people. The descendants are regarded with the same respect and addressed by the same titles as the children of a Raja. The chief in question, a mild, intelligent, but rather colourless man, had a large family of sons and one daughter—the Unku Sherifa when formally addressed, but “Long” to her relatives and intimates.

Unfortunately for her, this girl had nothing in common with either her parents or her brothers. Her mother, a sweet, gentle lady of middle age and charming manners, might probably have been well-favoured once, but there were only faint traces left to give grounds for the assumption. The brothers, with one exception, were decidedly plain, and none of them was gifted with more than moderate intelligence. The girl, on the contrary, was quite unusually attractive. Tall, slight, and graceful, very fair in complexion, with the Arab cast of feature—

the high forehead, straight nose, marvellous eyes, eyebrows, and eyelashes. A mouth like Cupid's bow and perfect teeth of dazzling whiteness; an oval face and dimpled chin; the head, with its wealth of jet-black hair, firm-set on a slender neck; small delicate hands and feet, an unformed figure, and a carriage which suggested pride of station, completed my friend's description of Unku Sherifa when first he met her.

Wide as was the difference in appearance between the girl and her family, far greater was the intellectual gulf which divided them. I seem to have read somewhere: "It is a serious misfortune when the solitary girl of a family has more intelligence than parents or brothers." Whether or not my memory betrays me—for I cannot place the words—the dictum applied in this case; for it no doubt bred in the girl a certain contempt for her own people, and for the Malay neighbours who were even less intelligent, while it drew her towards those of another race and a higher education, with whom Fate chose to throw her.

Whilst quite a child—from the age of ten years or so—Unku Sherifa had paid long visits to a British possession, where she had been taken up by the wife of a high official, who had two girls of her own

of much the same age as this Arab-Malay. No doubt the child's good looks and unusual intelligence first led to this intimacy ; and her winning manner soon made her the friend and constant companion of the two bright English girls. Unku Sherifa's father, an easy-going man, was probably flattered by the attention paid to his daughter, and feeling that she was of finer clay than himself and his other children, he was willing enough to see her in such good hands.

In the house of the English official, and in constant companionship with his wife and daughters, Unku Sherifa soon grew accustomed to meeting and speaking with Europeans, and the shyness common to native girls rapidly wore of. This life, this imperceptible education, where the half-Arab girl found herself an ever-welcome guest in the English house, continued for some years, during which Unku Sherifa acquired a taste, not only for the refined surroundings, but also for the companionship of those whose ways and appearance were, to her quick eyes, so different from those of her own home and her own people.

Then her friends left the East for ever ; and she returned to her own country and her father's house, with all her time leisure in which to draw comparisons between the past and the present, and to speculate on the uninviting prospects of the future.

Unku Sherifa found, on her return home, that an English officer was stationed within a few miles of her father's house, and as this officer had frequent interviews with the chief, and the latter had, at once and with some pride, introduced his daughter to the white man, the girl soon struck up a friendship with this stranger. She was fortunate, or unfortunate, enough to find, in this new friend a chivalrous, simple-minded gentleman, whose sympathies were entirely with the people of the country, and whose heart went out to this girl, who brightened the loneliness of his solitude.

Unku Sherifa, or "Long," as her new friend soon learned to call her, had a girl companion of her own rank and about her own age, and these two used to visit the Englishman almost daily, and spend much of their time in his house; driving down in the morning and home in the evening. The chief and his wife, very easy-going people as I have said, were entirely satisfied with an arrangement which they realised gave pleasure to a daughter, whose natural intelligence and special opportunities had carried her into a realm of knowledge beyond their old-fashioned ideas and more limited capacity. Matters continued on this footing till destiny sent Cathcart to this remote country. With his coming, the girls found

an occasional companion more nearly of their own age, and possessing greater attractions than the friend, who was old enough to be the father of either of them, and who had always treated them like children.

The elder girl, when Cathcart first met her, was sixteen or seventeen, and owing to the special circumstances of her social education, she possessed the manners of a woman of her class and nationality rather than a girl. By a very malignant trick of fate, it happened that the chief and his family were so immeasurably superior in intelligence, in birth, and in what may be called education, to the other Malays of the place, that the only two white men in the country were drawn to their society, not only by official relations, but by inclination, by their own isolation, and by what seemed to them, in those early days, the uninteresting character of their other neighbours. The attraction, therefore, was mutual; and the chief himself helped to cement the bonds of friendship by constantly consulting his daughter on the affairs of his country, and by entrusting her with messages to the Englishmen when he could not himself find time to visit them.

A year or two passed, and the girls, who were cousins, had often found their way to Cathcart's

quarters, either accompanied by their white friend, by Unku Long's mother, or simply without chaperon. They would arrive in the afternoon, and laugh over their unskilful attempts to play lawn-tennis, or they would drive together to some place of interest, or simply stroll about the house and garden till night drove them home. The country people, seeing these girls so constantly about with the white strangers, were astonished, and hardly knew what to make of it. At first they were inclined to gossip, but as there were no developments, and their chief seemed entirely satisfied, they accepted the situation as something beyond the comprehension of ignorant villagers.

With two people like Cathcart and Unku Long, constantly thrown into each other's society, and that under such circumstances, it was perhaps not very surprising that the man became greatly attracted by the girl's beauty and intelligence, or that she realised his admiration not less than his own personal charm. In telling me this part of the story, he was neither very explicit, nor did his manner invite me to ask more than he chose to divulge. I gathered, however, that one evening when the rest of the party were amusing themselves indoors, and he found himself alone with Long in the garden, he had been led by the disturbing beauty of the Eastern night to declare



an insane love for the girl, and to ask her if she would trust herself to him.

It did not seem to occur to her to show any maidenly resentment against that proposal. She only said, "I will not do what you ask ; because if I did, I should stay here always. How would you like that ?"

That simple question robbed the night of all its glamour, and, while it left Cathcart speechless, it conjured up a vista of trouble that showed him he had neither counted the cost nor was he prepared to face it. Not only that, but he was suddenly and bitterly conscious of the very unpleasant light in which he now stood revealed to his companion and his better self.

Then she said, very quietly, "When two people love each other, one always loves best, and you are not that one."

Cathcart's fury with himself was, for the instant, forgotten in his astonishment at hearing these words from a Malay girl's lips ; but he concluded that the hearts of men and women speak but one language all the world over, and he sought the first excuse he could find to relieve the embarrassment of a situation for which he could not sufficiently blame himself.

In the weeks and months which followed, Long's

manner towards Cathcart never changed; she was always the same beautiful, self-possessed, perfectly natural girl, the same bright, intelligent companion. But Cathcart, very conscious of his own ill-doing, rather avoided his former friends, and spent any leisure he had in the usually fruitless pursuit of the tiger, the bison, and other denizens of Malay jungles. He was not even very grieved when circumstances took him from a society he did not rightly understand, and sent him to reside in a British Settlement. A man does not easily forgive himself for making a false step, especially when it leaves him with a sense of his own unworthiness. He is, not uncommonly, apt to visit some of his anger on those against whom he has sinned, more especially if he is indebted to them for past favours.

Time passed, and with it Unku Long's father and earlier English friend. The Malay soil claimed their bodies, but the spirits of both are still alive in the land, which to one was an inheritance, and to the other an adopted home. With the death of the chief, Unku Long's family fell on evil days. Their means were greatly restricted, and they were no longer the greatest people in the place; for another king reigned, who had no special sympathy for their troubles. Worst of all; perhaps, their tried friend was "lost,"

as the Malays say, and his successor was more interested in the reigning chief than concerned with the fallen fortunes of a family that would grow strong in importunity as it grew weak in power. The widow, Unku Long's mother, a tender-hearted lady of weak character, was not constituted to fight against unkind circumstance, and amongst her numerous sons, not one of whom had fairly reached manhood, there was none fit to take his place as head of the family. In this stress the old lady, urged by tradition, by her relatives, and to some extent by her sons, made up her wavering mind that her daughter ought to be married. Acting on this reluctantly accepted advice, the widow consented to betroth Unku Long to the son of a neighbouring potentate, who rejoiced in a great title and very slender means. The youth in question was the merest boy—younger, if anything, than his *fiancée*. In appearance he was insignificant, in intelligence rather below the common standard of youths of his class, and having lived almost entirely in the interior, he was *gauche* and mannerless—what Malays slightly term “a jungle-wallah.”

Just at this juncture Cathcart, who had not been in the State for at least two years, who knew nothing of what was going on, and who had married

and was settled in Singapore, was compelled to pay a flying visit to the scene of his former sojourn. To emphasise the strange perversity of fate, Cathcart found himself—a soldier-friend his only companion—the tenant for three days of an isolated house within stone's-throw of the old chief's dwelling.

On the afternoon of his arrival, Unku Long and her mother drove over to this house, and, while the girl said little, the old lady made no concealment of her unfeigned pleasure at seeing Cathcart again. There was much to say, and she spent an hour talking of the old days, of her husband, and their lost friend the white man. In recalling his many virtues and kindnesses, she could not restrain her tears. By-and-by the soldier appeared, and was duly presented. Almost as it seemed without intention, Cathcart found himself walking through the garden with Long, having left the mother trying to make herself understood by the very much bored officer, who did not in the least appreciate the situation, or his own share in it.

There was not much time in which to waste words, and the girl made no attempt either to recall the past or dally with the present. Without preliminary or hesitation, but looking Cathcart straight in the eyes, she said, "I am to be married in two days."

Then passionately : " I loathe it ; I will not consent to it ; I cannot marry the man. I hate him. It is impossible. I don't want to marry any Malay. Oh ! take me away, take me away with you back to Singapore."

" I am very sorry," said Cathcart ; " I had no idea of anything of the kind, but I can't take you to Singapore. What should I do with you ?"

" Whatever you like," she replied. " Oh ! have pity on me, and take me away with you ; I cannot stay here to be made to marry this man."

" I cannot," he said ; " indeed, it is impossible—I am married."

" I don't care," said Long, " I don't care ; take me with you, and find me a house in Singapore, and I will do anything you please. You know you can if you wish. Ah ! for pity's sake, take me ; you must not leave me here. I shall kill myself, or kill him, or do something dreadful."

" I cannot, he said ; " you do not understand. What you ask is impossible. But I will speak to your mother, and see if something cannot be done to prevent the marriage."

" Ah ! that is useless," she replied, in a hopeless way ; " if I stay here, nothing can prevent it, for it is to be the night after to-morrow. Let us go back to my mother."

Cathcart, deeply moved by the girl's distress, and rebelling almost as much as she did against this marriage which was being forced upon her, sought the mother, and used all the arguments and persuasions he could think of to plead the daughter's cause. He felt all the time that he had no right to interfere, and that he would do no good, but for all that he appealed to the old lady, and when he had exhausted all other means, asked her what their dead friend, the Englishman, would have thought of forcing Long into this distasteful alliance. It hardly wanted that to touch the widow, who was accustomed rather to be led by her daughter than to dictate to her. When she parted with Cathcart, she was tearful, distracted, and full of regrets for her own forlorn position; without husband to relieve her of responsibility, or adviser whom she could trust and whose word would carry weight with her relatives. She promised to see what could be done, but said that as all the preparations for the ceremony had been made, she feared it was too late to make any change in the arrangements, or find excuses to satisfy the bridegroom and his friends.

The girl said nothing. She had made a desperate appeal to Cathcart, and it had failed. She knew

that nothing but death could save her. It was Fate, she said, falling back on the Malay's last word.

Under somewhat similar circumstances, Malay girls occasionally say they will destroy themselves, but they very, very rarely carry out the threat. It is not because they fear death; I am rather inclined to believe that it is because suicide is not the custom. Men, over-wrought and over-tried, seek and obtain death by the blind onslaught on friends and foes, which has gained for them an unenviable reputation. Women do not *měng-âmok*; they submit, outwardly, while in their hearts they rebel passionately against the cruelties of life, the necessities imposed by custom and the rules of Muhammadan society. Therefore, nothing further happened to interfere with Unku Long's marriage, and the ceremony was duly performed in a quiet way befitting people in straitened circumstances. Two nights later Cathcart and his friend, the former much against the grain, attended the final stage of the proceedings. The girl's face of stony misery—misery so hopeless that she seemed to be unaware of what was going on, and never by the slightest glance showed that she recognised him or any of those about her—drove Cathcart from the house, with some lame

excuse for his apparent rudeness. He left the State the next morning, and never saw Unku Long again.

That is all of her; at least all that I am prepared to tell, beyond this brief statement. The marriage was a failure—a failure of the worst—and in a few weeks, or at least months, the girl was divorced from her husband. The rest does not concern this tale, and I did not hear it from Cathcart. Unku Sherifa, the chief's daughter, fell on evil days, drank of the dregs from the cup of life, and, after two or three years' wandering with her poor old mother, the girl died, and was buried in a foreign land, far from her own people.

Ages afterwards the girl-friend of her childhood told me, with tears in her eyes, the pitiful story of Unku Long's death. As I looked at that plain woman, with her courtly manners and all the evidences of worldly contentment, I could not help contrasting her lot with that of her long-dead cousin. Yet it was the other who seemed to begin life with all the advantages. Truly it is a dangerous thing for white people to take up attractive native children, and, while spoiling them for the life of their race and inheritance, set their faces toward a road which their unaccustomed feet can only tread with pain



and misery, while the bourne, more likely than not, will be disaster.

As for Cathcart, it is curious that much the same fate overtook him. He became reckless, almost to the point of loss of principle, alienated his friends, fell into difficulties, and incurred some measure of disgrace. He left this country, and died thousands of miles away, on the borders of yet another of the many outposts of the world-embracing British Empire.

. . . . .

As I was writing these last words, a beautiful green *cicada*, with great eyes and long transparent wings, flew into the room and dashed straight at a lamp. In spite of several severe burns, and all my efforts to save her, she has accomplished her own destruction, and now lies dead and stark; the victim of a new light which excited her curiosity and admiration, but the consuming power of which she did not understand.

She would have been wiser to remain in the cool, moonlit jungle, where, at least, she was at home with those of her own kind; but the creatures of the forest have not yet learned the danger of giving way to natural instincts.

## IN CHARCOAL

THE sun had just set. I was wandering along a level grey road, between stretches of emerald grass, broken by clumps of palms and flowering trees, groups of shrubs, with foliage of many brilliant hues, and pools of clear, dark water—glittering with strange lights or sombre with deep reflections. The plain was darkening momentarily, darkening with the shadows of swiftly-approaching night; but, half a mile away, to the eastward, the valley was bounded by the steep slopes of a great range of forest-covered hills, rising to a height of five thousand feet, and stretching away, to north and south, out of the range of vision. Gradually these slopes were suffused with an indescribable colour, that rose-red effulgence which illumines the heavens in the short aftermath of a far-eastern sunset. Under this amazing glow, this deep conscious blush, which seemed to grow from inward rather than to be thrown upon them by any outward influence, every

ridge and every valley was defined with marvellous clearness. One seemed to see into the heart of those virgin forests ; while the stems and branches of the great trees were so minutely delineated that the spectacle produced a sense of unreality, which was heightened by the rapid fading of both colour and light. The whole effect lasted but a few minutes, and then the hills became grey and indistinct ; a huge mass of jungle-covered mountain, growing dim and mysterious under a purple-tinged haze, from which every trace of warmth and colour suddenly vanished.

I had stopped several times to watch these successive changes ; but, when the light failed, I turned away from the darkening hills and strolled homewards. As I came to a bridge, I saw, seated on the parapet, a figure that at once arrested my attention. It was a child ; a boy, with an unusually dark face, wherein shone eyes whose gloom and pathos were intensified by the startling contrast between the sombre blackness of the iris and its weirdly-white surrounding.

The child seemed scarcely more than eight years old, and his haunting look compelled me to go and sit by him. He did not move, and I said, "What is the matter ?" But he gave no answer. I

repeated my question, but he only stared into the distance.

I laid my hand gently on his small brown hand, and I said, "Will you not speak to me? where do you live?"

Then he turned slowly towards me, and gazed for a long time into my face before he answered, "Far away, over there, in the jungle."

"But what are you doing here?" I inquired. "Nothing," he replied.

That was evident, but his silence made me all the more determined to learn why he was sitting there, all alone, at such a time, and with that expression of mute wretchedness, sad enough in the aged, but uncanny in a child of his years.

"What is your name?" I asked. His lips moved as though to speak, but he said nothing, and I saw, from the look in his face, that he had learned the reluctance of all his race to tell their own names. I did not press him, but said, "Have you no parents?" He answered simply, "No." I was surprised, and repeated my previous question, "Then what are you doing here?" This time he replied, "My grandmother brought me."

"But where is she?" I asked. "What is she doing?"

"I don't know," he said. "She went out, and I came here."

"Have you no brothers or sisters?" I said.

"No."

"Are you hungry?"

"No."

"But what is the matter? why do you look so sad?"

"My father is dead."

"I am so sorry," I said; "when did he die?"

"This morning," answered the child.

"This morning! You poor boy; what was the matter with him?"

"He was hanged."

Even to a child, a very small and very dark-skinned boy, it is hard to know what kind of comfort to offer when he tells you that his father was hanged that morning. The look of misery in those strange eyes was no longer a mystery. The troubles of the world had begun early for him, and had come to stay. Surely some one ought to be comforting the child. It was pitiful to find him sitting alone in the gathering gloom, brooding over a trouble like this. His mother! But he had said he had no mother. Poor little waif, fatherless and motherless, homeless, too, for the moment, miles away from that jungle-hut

and his playmates ; only an old woman to stand between him and the reproach of his father's death, the memory of the curse that would cling to him for all time.

It seemed to me that I ought to remember the crime for which this child's father had died only that morning, the morning of a day which had gone in a blaze of such colour, that the sight of it had stirred one's senses to a feeling of intense delight very closely akin to pain.

No ! I could not recollect anything about the case. The man had paid the extreme penalty, and might already be suffering a further punishment for his sins. But what had he done, this obscure dweller in the jungle, to cut him off from the society of men and the care of this orphan child, who now mourned him with dry eyes, more sad than tears ?

I put my arm round the boy and tried to win his confidence by my sympathy, to comfort him with such lame and halting words as I could think of to appeal to his intelligence. I felt all the time the hopelessness of the task, and the child's expression of dejected preoccupation froze some of the words on my lips. Once or twice the boy tried to repress a sigh of pain, or shuddered with the torture of a smothered sob ; otherwise he made no sign.

Little by little, I managed to coax him out of himself and the thought of his own misery, and, as I talked to him, I tried to think what could be done for the poor little mite, whose face seemed already to foreshadow the troubles that must come to him by the fatal inheritance of blood. The child was not shy, he was only supremely miserable ; lonely, conscious, horribly conscious, of the suffering and the grief that make so large a part of human life, but from which children in their early youth are protected. While my thoughts were divided between his present and his future, there suddenly returned to me the question, which I had put aside before, of what had sent his father to the gallows, and I said, "What was it your father did?"

The child replied, "He killed my mother."

THE END





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